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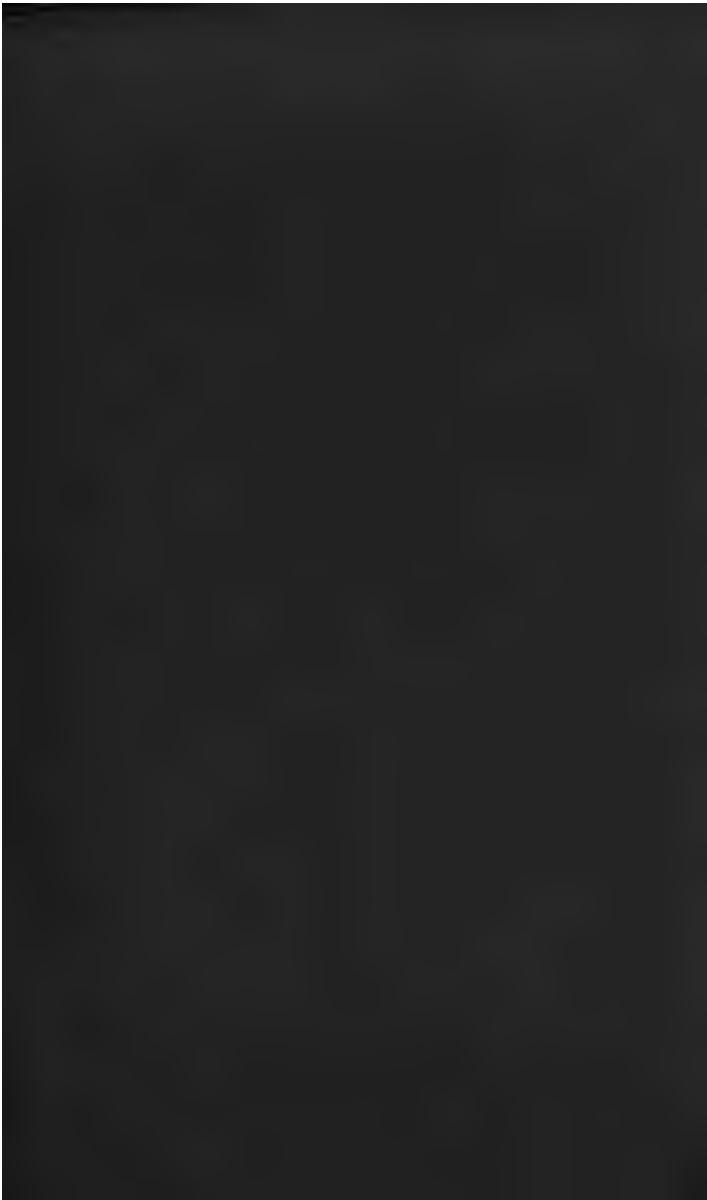
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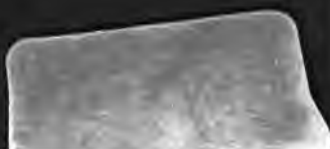




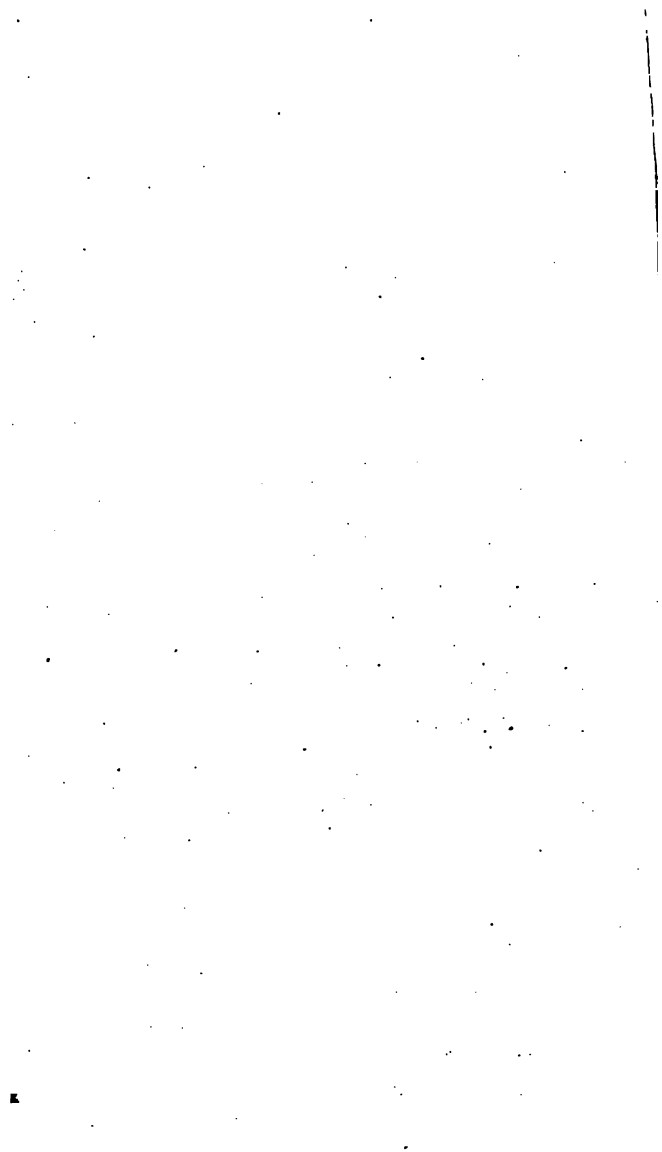
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THE
BOOK OF PSALMS,

As Used in the Daily Service.

WITH
SHORT HEADINGS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES,

BY THE
REV. ERNEST HAWKINS, B.D.

PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S,
AND MINISTER OF CURZON CHAPEL, MAY FAIR.



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PREFACE.

THE Book of Psalms, in accordance with the appointed order of the Services of our Church, is read through every month, and is consequently more familiar to us than any other portion of Scripture.

Yet it must, I fear, be acknowledged by most of us, that we go on month after month reading these inspired songs of Zion in a listless, mechanical way, without distinguishing the character and subject of the several poems, or understanding the sense of the more obscure passages.

To correct in some degree this careless and irreverent habit, and to enable the young and unlearned more especially to read the Psalms, "with the spirit and with the understanding also," is the design of this little Manual.

Disclaiming all intention of undertaking anything like a general Commentary, I have confined myself, more or less strictly, to the following two points ; namely,

I. To prefix to each Psalm a short heading, showing its principal subject, or leading idea, so as to prepare the reader's mind for what follows. This heading is substituted for the first words of the Vulgate Translation, which surely are retained to very little purpose in those editions of the Prayer Book which are intended for the use of the poor and the illiterate.

II. To explain the more difficult and obscure verses.

Unless the limited nature of my design be kept in view, the Notes will probably be considered scanty and meagre ; but I venture to think that no little evil has arisen from the opposite system of overlaying texts, sufficiently intelligible to serious and thoughtful minds, with diffuse and unnecessary comment. The result too often is that the Word of God is lost in the amplification of the commentator ; and the reader, indolently resigning himself to the guidance of some favourite author, is tempted to neglect altogether that patient and devout meditation upon Holy Scripture, which forms part of the essential nourishment of the Christian life. I have therefore thought it best to confine myself for the most part to short explanatory notes, feeling that in proportion as the difficulties which obscure the text are removed, the devotional study and use of the Psalms will be promoted.

If, however, it still be objected that the spiritual and prophetical application of the several Psalms has been too sparingly noticed, my answer is that this subject has been fully treated in the well-known work of Bishop Horne. That excellent prelate and writer has not only furnished us with a comprehensive-summary of the various subjects which are treated of in the Psalter, but has afforded us a clue to the meaning of the poetical and figurative language in which large portions of it are clothed. But, notwithstanding all that has been written, the Christian student of the Psalms will discover for himself, at every perusal, fresh lessons of divine wisdom and of practical holiness. *He will moreover find in them many of the fundamental*

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doctrines of revealed religion ; as, for example, the Unity of the Godhead, Original Sin, the necessity of Repentance, the Forgiveness of Sins, and the guidance and support of God's Holy Spirit. And thus will he be led to the inevitable conclusion that He who inspired the Apostles of Christianity, spake also by the mouth of the Psalmists and Prophets of the earlier dispensation.

The thoughtful reader of the Psalms will further be struck by their singular purity of thought and language. He will bear in mind that a large portion of them was written a thousand years before the advent of Jesus Christ, that is to say, about the period when Homer was painting for all time the portraiture of the gods of Olympus, their lust, ambition, and cruelty ; many centuries, therefore, before the favourite minstrels of Greece and Rome began to throw the dazzling colours of poetry over the worst forms of pride, worldliness, and sensuality.

Yet, during all those centuries, while the most famous poets of classical antiquity were employing their genius to consecrate the false creeds and corrupt practices of heathenism, the Sacred Bards of Israel were celebrating in songs of surpassing beauty and sublimity the one living and true God—Creator and Governor of the world—whose eye is in every place, and whose hand is ever outstretched to uphold truth and innocence, and to punish oppression and wrong.

How are we to account for this striking difference of sentiment between Jewish and Classical writers ? Solely by the fact that the Psalmists of Israel were enlightened

by the knowledge of God's revealed will, and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The Psalms, thoroughly imbued as they are with the spirit, national and religious, of God's ancient people, and clothed in language which at every turn reminds us of their peculiar laws, ceremonies, and worship, have yet been adopted into the religious service of every Christian people. The principle obviously is this,—that as "All scripture is given by inspiration of God," so must it be profitable for the Church in all times ; and the Christian Church is but the development of the Jewish. Indeed, our Lord and His Apostles have in numerous instances shown us how we are to understand and apply the Psalms in a spiritual sense, and have thereby justified us in carrying this application further. Thus, for example, Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the Ark, the Temple, the Sanctuary, are all expressions which may suitably represent the Church of Christ ; David is a type of the Messiah ; his enemies and persecutors are the bitter opponents of Christ and His kingdom ; his victories are the triumphs of the Gospel. The sacrifices of the Law, besides their main purpose of foreshadowing the one great Atonement, remind us of those sacrifices dearer to God,—a broken and a contrite heart, lust mortified, the body brought into subjection. The offerings and incense of the Temple are the alms and prayers of Christian worshippers.

To enter into the full meaning and spirit of the Psalms, careful attention must be given to their style and structure. They are poetical compositions, and are consequently dis-

tinguished by the peculiar features of poetry—bold figure—abrupt transition—highly coloured description—frequent personification; but besides these characteristics, which belong, in different degrees, to the poetical language of all nations, the poetry of the Hebrews has a structure peculiar to itself. To this the name of *Parallelism* has been given, from the fact that the first half of a verse runs, as it were, even, or *parallel* with the second. It is a species of rhythm in which ideas answer to ideas, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a certain rule or measure. Parallelism is of different kinds. The most common is that which may be termed *responsive*, or *corresponding*, where the thought conveyed in one line is repeated, often with more emphasis, in the other. It is owing to this that a single verse of the Psalms not unfrequently supplies both the prayer of the minister and the response of the people in our Liturgy. The following are examples:—

O Lord, open Thou our lips.
And our mouth shall shew forth Thy praise. li. 15.
O God, make speed to save us.
O Lord, make haste to help us. lxx. 1.
O Lord, hear our prayer.
And let our cry come unto Thee. cii. 1.

The fifty-first and ninety-sixth Psalms may be cited as good illustrations throughout of this national metre, as far as it can be represented in our language. Again, what can be a better specimen of clause answering to, or corresponding with clause, than the first three verses of Psalm lxxvi.

In Jewry is God known :
His Name is great in Israel.

At Salem is his tabernacle :
And his dwelling in Sion.

There brake He the arrows of the bow :
The shield, the sword, and the battle.

Again, the same arrangement is strikingly observable in Psalm cv. Take, for example, verses 20—23 :

The king sent and delivered him :
The prince of the people let him go free.

He made him lord also of his house :
And ruler of all his substance ;

That he might inform his princes after his will :
And teach his senators wisdom.

Israel also came into Egypt :
And Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham.

The *second kind of Parallelism* is that in which the relation between the two clauses of a verse is that of *opposition*, or *contrast* ; as, for instance,

The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous :
But the way of the ungodly shall perish. i. 7.

They are brought down and fallen :
But we are risen and stand upright. xx. 8.

Heaviness may endure for a night :
But joy cometh in the morning. xxx. 5.

The *third kind* is that which is termed *constructive*. In this the thought is expanded and carried on through both clauses of the verse. Thus,

The law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul :
The testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple.

The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever :
The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.
xix. 7—9.

Thus, again,

O that I had wings like a dove :
For then would I flee away and be at rest.

Lo, then would I get me away far off :
And remain in the wilderness.

I would make haste to escape :
Because of the stormy wind and tempest. lv. 6—8.

It is unnecessary to enter into the more minute varieties of this style ; but it is important to notice that the poetry of the Hebrews, being framed in a metre which depends not upon words and rhymes, but upon the order and arrangement of thoughts, is capable of being rendered into other languages with less detriment to its spirit and beauty than that of any other nation. It is for this reason that the form as well as the substance of the Psalms is more faithfully retained in the prose of our authorized versions, than in any metrical translation.

It is proper to notice another artificial arrangement of certain Psalms. Seven of them—namely, Psalms xxv, xxxiv, xxxvii, cxi, cxii, cxix, cxlv,—are called *alphabetical*, because the first letters of each line, or stanza, follow, though not with invariable regularity, the order of the alphabet. They are thus what we call *acrostics*.

The reader is referred to the tables which are appended, for (1.) the principal topic of each Psalm ; (2.) a classification of the Psalms according to subjects ; (3.) a reference to the passages quoted in the New Testament. But it may be as well to point out in this place two particular groups or divisions of Psalms. First, the six which constitute the greater Hallel, or office of praise, cxiii—cxviii. (see note on Psalm cxiii.) : and the fifteen which are called, in the title of the Bible Version, Psalms of degrees, and more commonly

"Pilgrim Psalms," cxx—cxxxiv. (See note on Psalm cxx.) The last five are called Hallelujah Psalms, from each of them beginning with that word, which signifies, "Praise ye the Lord." See Bible Version.

There is a tradition that the Jews ordinarily used Psalm xxiv. on the first day of the week, xlviii. on the second, lxxxii. on the third, xciv. on the fourth, lxxxv. on the fifth, xciii. on the sixth, and xcii. on the seventh.

The Psalms were from very early times arranged in five books, and this division is recognised in the Septuagint, the most ancient translation (Greek) about B.C. 286. But it would be impossible to assign any distinctive character or subject to the several books. The first ends with Psalm xli, the second with Psalm lxxii, and these two together comprise nearly all the Psalms that are ascribed to David. Indeed, at this point in the Bible Version it is added, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." The third book embraces Psalms lxxiii—lxxxix; the fourth, xc—cvi; the fifth, cvii—cl. Each book concludes with a doxology. It will, however, be borne in mind that St. Peter, referring to prophecies concerning Judas in the second and fifth divisions, speaks of them as drawn from "*the book of Psalms*" (Acts i. 20), and that the whole Psalter is treated as one book in the canon.

More interesting is it to mention the Authors to whom the several inspired poems are assigned. The first and chiefest is, of course, David, to whom the whole book is popularly given. But the titles prefixed in the Bible Version give to him only seventy-three; namely, Psalms iii—ix,

xi—xxxii, xxxiv—xli, li—lxv, lxviii—lxx, lxxxvi, ci, ciii, cviii—cx, cxxii, cxxiv, cxxxi, cxxxiii, cxxxviii—cxlv.

The other Authors to whom particular Psalms are ascribed are as follows :—

To Moses, Psalm xc.

To Solomon, Psalms lxxii, cxxvii.

To Asaph, twelve Psalms :—l, lxxiii—lxxxiii.

To the Sons of Korah, eleven Psalms :—xlii, xliv—xlix, lxxxiv, lxxxv, lxxxvii, lxxxviii.

To Heman the Ezrahite, Psalm lxxxviii. (2 Chron. xxxv. 15.)

To Ethan the Ezrahite, Psalm lxxxix.

There are remaining fifty Psalms to which the name of no author is prefixed ; but we have the warrant of Scripture for assigning two of them, namely, Psalms ii. and xcv., to David. See Acts iv. 25—28 ; Heb. iv. 7.

With regard to the execution of the work little need be said. Affecting neither learning nor originality, I have availed myself of all the assistance, whether in the way of translation or comment, which came within my reach, and have only been withheld from citing my authorities by the fear that a frequent reference to learned authors would give a pedantic air to a little unpretending manual, which aims only at being practical and useful.

I must, however, be permitted to offer my grateful acknowledgments to the learned author of the “Cleveland Psalter,” for reading over the sheets of the first edition, and giving me the benefit of his judicious criticism.

I must also acknowledge the valuable hints and corrections which I have received from many friends, among whom I am bound more especially to mention my excellent colleague, the Rev. W. T. Bullock.

In many instances it will be found that particular difficulties in the Prayer Book Version, which is that of Cranmer (1539), are cleared up by reference to the authorized translation in the Bible, which was made more than seventy years later (1611): and in all cases where the words from the Bible translation have been quoted in the Notes, they are marked with inverted commas [“ ”].

Those who have learning and leisure for study will be at no loss what translators and commentators to consult; but the English Reader will for the most part find what he wants in Bishop Horne, Hengstenberg, Slade, and in the Plain Commentary. My object has been to elicit from these and many other sources what seemed necessary to put the ordinary student in possession, 1st, of the accurate translation of the text; and 2d, of its true meaning. My aim has been to be useful: and to be useful for the generality of readers, it is essential to be brief. By this standard I desire to be measured; and if I have contributed, in however small a degree, to make this portion of the Word of God more intelligible and edifying to the young and the unlearned, I shall be thankful to God for the privilege of employing my “one talent” in His service.

May, 1859.

SUBJECTS OF THE PSALMS.

PSALM

- 1 Contrast between the Righteous and the Ungodly.
- 2 Triumphant Establishment of Christ's Kingdom.
- 3 Trust in God amid Troubles and Dangers.
- 4 Entire and joyful Confidence in God.
- 5 God the Righteous Judge.
- 6 Prayer in Trouble and Affliction accepted.
- 7 Appeal of Innocence against Falsehood and Malice.
- 8 The Glory of God in the Works of Creation.
- 9 Praise for Past, Prayer for Future, Mercies.
- 10 The Cry of the Poor against the Oppressor.
- 11 Trust in God in Times of Danger and Perplexity.
- 12 Appeal to God for Help against treacherous Men.
- 13 Prayer in Dejection of Spirits.
- 14 The Corruption and Wickedness of Unbelievers.
- 15 The Pattern of a true Member of the Church.
- 16 Present Contentment and future Glory.
- 17 Prayer of the righteous Man.
- 18 A Song of Victory and Thanksgiving.
- 19 The Heavens God's Teachers to all Nations.
- 20 Prayer for the King on the Eve of Battle.
- 21 Prayer answered.—Thanksgiving for Victory.
- 22 *Christ on the Cross.—The Conversion of the Gentiles.*

PSALM

- 23 The Good Shepherd.
- 24 Jehovah the King of Earth and Heaven.
- 25 Prayer for Protection, Guidance, and Pardon.
- 26 The Plea of conscious Integrity.
- 27 Trust in God in the midst of Dangers.
- 28 Prayer and Thanksgiving for Deliverance.
- 29 The Voice of the Lord.
- 30 Preservation from Danger or Sickness.
- 31 Prayer of Faith in the midst of Adversity.
- 32 The Blessedness of having our Sins forgiven.
- 33 God's Justice, Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.
- 34 Invitation to united Praise.—Lessons of holy Living.
- 35 Appeal to God's Justice against evil Men.
- 36 Man's Wickedness.—God's Goodness.
- 37 The different Ends of the Righteous and the Wicked.
- 38 Self-abasement and Confession of Sin.
- 39 The Shortness and Vanity of Human Life.
- 40 The Obedience and willing Sacrifice of Christ.
- 41 The Blessedness of the Merciful.—The false Friend.
- 42 Ardent longing for the Sanctuary and Worship of God.
- 43 Prayer for Divine Guidance.
- 44 The Voice of the Church under Persecution.
- 45 The Marriage of Christ with his Spouse the Church.
- 46 God the Refuge of his People.
- 47 Jehovah, the God both of Jews and Gentiles.
- 48 Jerusalem a Type of the Christian Church.
- 49 The Vanity of Riches.
- 50 Formal and Spiritual Worship.
- 51 David's Confession and Repentance.
- 52 The Slanderer requited.
- 53 The Moral Depravity of Unbelievers.
- 54 God the Helper of the Oppressed.
- 55 The Treacherous Friend.
- 56 Trust in God while surrounded by Enemies.
- 57 For Deliverance from Persecution.
- 58 Denunciation of Unjust Rulers and Judges.

PSALM

- 59 For Deliverance from Treacherous Enemies.
- 60 David's Triumph over his Enemies.
- 61 Prayer of David in Exile.
- 62 Trust in God and in None beside.
- 63 Longing Desire for God and his Grace.
- 64 God's Righteous Retribution.
- 65 Thanksgiving for the Fruitfulness of the Earth.
- 66 Past and Present Mercies.
- 67 For the Spread of God's Truth among all Nations.
- 68 Removal of the Ark to Mount Sion.
- 69 David the Type of Christ in Suffering.
- 70 For Deliverance from Danger.
- 71 God our Support in Youth, and Refuge in old Age.
- 72 The Reign of Christ in Peace and Righteousness.
- 73 Impatience and Distrust corrected.
- 74 Appeal for God's Help and Protection.
- 75 God the only sure Stay of a Nation.
- 76 National Thanksgiving for Victory.
- 77 Past Mercies a Source of Comfort in Affliction.
- 78 God's Mighty Works for his People of old.
- 79 A People's Lamentation, and Cry for Help.
- 80 The Vine transplanted from Egypt.
- 81 God's Expostulation with his People.
- 82 God's Admonition to Unjust Judges.
- 83 Prayer against the Confederate Nations.
- 84 The Exile's Longing for the House of God.
- 85 Temporal and Eternal Redemption.
- 86 Prayer in Trouble and Distress.
- 87 Sion the Spiritual Birthplace of all Nations.
- 88 Lamentation of a sorrowful and afflicted Spirit.
- 89 God's covenanted Mercies.
- 90 God's Eternity :—Man's short and fleeting Existence.
- 91 God the Protector of his Servants in all Dangers.
- 92 Praise to God the Almighty and All-righteous.
- 93 The Sovereignty of Jehovah.
- 94 God the All-seeing, All-avenging Judge.

PSALM

- 95 Invitation to the Praise and Worship of Jehovah.
- 96 Jehovah the sole Object of Worship.
- 97 Jehovah the God and King of all the Earth.
- 98 Song of Victory.—Christ's Coming to Judgment.
- 99 The Majesty, Justice, and Mercy of Jehovah.
- 100 A Call upon all Nations to Praise the God of All.
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- 104 Hymn of Praise to the Creator of all Things.
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- 106 The Trials of the Wilderness.
- 107 The Church's Song of Thanksgiving.
- 108 The Conqueror's Song of Triumph.
- 109 God's Judgments against his Enemies.
- 110 Christ seated at the Right Hand of the Father.
- 111 The Faithfulness of Jehovah to his Covenant.
- 112 The Blessedness of the Godly.
- 113 God's Power and Condescension.
- 114 The Exodus from Egypt.
- 115 The God of Israel and the Idols of the Heathen.
- 116 The Believer's Thanksgiving for Mercies.
- 117 Call upon the Heathen to Praise Jehovah.
- 118 Song of National Thanksgiving.
- 119 The Excellency of God's Word.
- 120 Israel in the midst of his Enemies.
- 121 God's Providential Care of his Servants.
- 122 The Tribes of Israel on their way to the Temple.
- 123 Humble Looking up to God.
- 124 God the Defence of his People.
- 125 Trust in God our best Security.
- 126 Song of the Captives returned from Babylon.
- 127 No Good Thing without God's Blessing.
- 128 The Blessings of the Godly.
- 129 Past Trials and past Deliverances.
- 130 God's Mercy the Hope of the Penitent.

PSALM

- 131 Meekness and Resignation.
 - 132 Zeal for the House of God.
 - 133 Brotherly Love and Harmony.
 - 134 The Office of God's Ministers.
 - 135 Thanksgiving for National Mercies.
 - 136 God's ever-enduring Mercy.
 - 137 The Jew's Remembrance of his Captivity.
 - 138 God's Loving-kindness and Truth.
 - 139 The Omnipresence and Omniscience of God.
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 - 141 For Grace to Resist Temptation.
 - 142 The Cry of the Friendless.
 - 143 Prayer of Faith in the midst of Troubles.
 - 144 For Victory and the Blessings of Peace.
 - 145 The Power, Righteousness, and Mercy of God.
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 - 149 The Triumph of the Church.
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The following CLASSIFICATION may be convenient to those who have recourse to the Psalms as a Divine Manual of Meditation, Prayer, and Thanksgiving. It may also be of Service to the Clergy in Visiting the Sick.

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	11.	Acts xiii. 35.	XCIV.	11.	1 Cor. iii. 20.
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	8.	Matt. xxvii. 43.	CIV.	4.	Heb. i. 7.
	18.	{Matt. xxvii. 35. Mark xv. 24. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24.	CIX.	2.	John xv. 25.
	22.	Heb. ii. 12.			
XXIV.	1.	1 Cor. x. 26.			
XXXI.	6.	Luke xxiii. 46.	CX.	1.	{Matt. xxii. 44. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42.
XXXII.	1, 2.	Rom. iv. 7, 8.			
XXXIV.	12—15.	1 Pet. iii. 10—12.	CXII.	9.	2 Cor. ix. 9.
XXXV.	19.	John xv. 25.	CXVI.	10.	2 Cor. iv. 13.
XXXVI.	1.	Rom. iii. 18.	CXVII.	1.	Rom. xv. 11.
XL.	8—10.	Heb. x. 5—7.	CXVIII.	6.	Heb. xiii. 6.
XLI.	9.	John xiii. 18.			
XLIV.	22.	Rom. viii. 36.	CXVIII.	22, 23.	{Matt. xxi. 42. Mark xii. 10, 11. Luke xx. 17. Acts iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 7.
XLV.	7, 8.	Heb. i. 8, 9.			
LI.	4.	Rom. iii. 4.		26.	{Matt. xxi. 9. Mark xi. 9. John xii. 13.
LIII.	4.	Rom. iii. 12.			
LXVIII.	18.	Eph. iv. 8.	CXXXII.	12.	Acts ii. 30.
	9.	{John ii. 17. Rom. xv. 3.		18.	Luke i. 69.
LXIX.	9.		CXL.	3.	Rom. iii. 13.

The Book of Psalms.

Morning.]

PSALM I.

[*Day 1.*

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE UNGODLY.

BLESSED is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners : and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord : and in his law will he exercise himself day and night.

3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side : that will bring forth his fruit in due season.

4 His leaf also shall not wither : and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.

5 As for the ungodly, it is not so with them : but they are like the chaff, which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth.

Ps. I.—This Psalm seems to have been placed first, as a suitable introduction to the whole Psalter, when the books of Scripture were collected and arranged in their present order, perhaps by Ezra, about the year before Christ 444.

1. *Blessed is the man, &c.*] The opening words of the Psalter pronounce him the happy man who avoids all fellowship with the wicked; and they warn us that if once we begin to follow the advice of the *ungodly*, we shall go on to lead the life of *sinners*, and at last be found to take pleasure in the company of *scorners*, who make a mock at *sin*. Prov. xiv. 9; Jer.

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xv. 17. See also Rom. i. 32.

2. *The law of the Lord*] The Word of God, that is, the Holy Scriptures. See Josh. i. 8.

3. *Like a tree*] The same figure (derived from the practice of planting trees by the side of rivers and fountains in eastern countries) is employed by the prophet Jeremiah, ch. xvii. 8.

— *His fruit*] The masculine possessive pronoun *his* is here, as also in the next verse, "*His leaf*," and throughout the English Bible, used instead of the neuter *its*, which was not in use when our Version was made.

5. *Like the chaff, which the wind*

B

6 Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment : neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

7 But the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous : and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

PSALM II.

TRIUMPHANT ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

Proper Psalm for Easter Day.

WHY do the heathen so furiously rage together : and why do the people imagine a vain thing ?

2 The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together : against the Lord, and against his Anointed.

scattereth, &c.] It will be borne in mind that in the East corn was thrashed and winnowed in the open field. See 2 Sam. xxiv. 18.

6.—*To stand in the judgment]* To bear the test of God's judgment; to stand acquitted in God's sight.

—*The congregation of the righteous]* The company of God's people; the true Israelites of old; the Church of Christ *now*, from which wilful transgressors shall be cut off. Exod. xii. 19; Num. xv. 30.

7. *But the Lord, &c.]* The contrast is better marked in the Bible Version, "*For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*"

—*Knoweth]* Notes and approves. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Ps. II. represents, as in a vision, the daring but vain revolt of the heathen nations against the King which Jehovah had decreed to set up, and his triumph over all his enemies. It was universally regarded by the ancient Jews as prophetic of the Messiah, and his victorious reign, and is quoted in four different places of the New

Testament: Acts iv. 25, 26; xiii. 33; Hebrews i. 5; Rev. ii. 27. This and the following Psalms, except x. and xxxiii. up to xli. inclusive, are ascribed to David, and embrace the period from B.C. 1063 to B.C. 1015.

1. *Why do the heathen]* These words are cited by St. Peter as prophetic of the confederacy of Herod and Pontius Pilate; of Jews and of Gentiles against Christ. See Acts iv. 25, 26.

—*The people]* That is, the Peoples, or Nations. The context will commonly enable the reader to judge when the Jewish people, and when the heathen nations are meant.

2. *His Anointed]* David; who, in accordance with God's command had been anointed by Samuel, king over Israel. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. But the words contain a prophecy of the Messiah, or Christ, both which titles have the same meaning as Anointed, and signify a person consecrated or anointed with oil, as chosen men of old were, for the office of king, priest, and prophet. See Exodus xxviii. 41; xxix. 7; 1 Kings xix. 16.

3 'Let us break their bonds asunder : and cast away their cords from us.'

4 He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn : the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall He speak unto them in his wrath : and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 'Yet have I set my King : upon my holy hill of Sion.'

7 I will preach the law, whereof the Lord hath said unto me : 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee.'

8 'Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance : and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9 'Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron : and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings : be learned, ye that are judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord in fear : and rejoice unto Him with reverence.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish

3. *Let us break their bonds asunder*] Such is the language of the rebellious kings and rulers. See Jer. v. 5 ; Luke xix. 14.

4. *Shall have them in derision*] Shall mock at their vain attempts to resist the Divine will.

6. *Yet have I set my King*] The Almighty here announces his sovereign purpose to set up the kingdom of his Son in spite of the opposition of kings and Peoples. Acts v. 31.

7. *I will preach the law, &c.*] David, who is here the speaker, says, "I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, 'Thou art my Son,'" &c. The decree and promise are applicable, first, to David and his triumph over all his enemies round about; but, secondly, and in a more especial manner, to the uni-

versal dominion of Christ. Matt. iii. 17 ; xvii. 5 ; Acts xiii. 33.

8. *The heathen for thine inheritance, &c.*] A promise to David of victory over the surrounding nations; but more truly a prophecy of the triumph of Christ's kingdom over the heathen world.

9. *Thou shalt bruise, &c.*] 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.' Rev. ii. 27.

10. *Be learned*] Be taught or instructed.

11. *Rejoice unto Him with reverence*] The Bible has simply "Rejoice with trembling." Joy that the Messiah is exalted to be king, should be tempered or mixed with fear lest we serve Him amiss.

12. *Kiss the Son*] Submit, and do homage, to the Son. John v. 23.

from the right way : if his wrath be kindled, (yea, but a little,) blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

PSALM III.

TRUST IN GOD AMID TROUBLES AND DANGERS.

LORD, how are they increased that trouble me : many are they that rise against me.

2 Many one there be that say of my soul : 'There is no help for him in his God.'

3 But Thou, O Lord, art my defender : Thou art my worship, and the lifter up of my head.

4 I did call upon the Lord with my voice : and He heard me out of his holy hill.

5 I laid me down and slept, and rose up again : for the Lord sustained me.

6 I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people : that have set themselves against me round about.

7 Up, Lord, and help me, O my God : for Thou smitest all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone ; Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

12 *The right way.*] Or, emphatically 'THE Way,' the way of life and salvation. The best explanation of the expression will be found in Psalm i. 6. It is adopted in one of the petitions of the Litany, wherein we pray God to 'govern his holy Church universal in the *right way*.'

— *If his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little*] Better perhaps, For his wrath will soon (within a little while) be kindled.

Ps. III. is in the ancient Title, which is retained in the Bible Version, called "A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son ;" and was, perhaps, used as a morning hymn. See 2 Sam. xv. 10—14.

1. *How are they increased that*

trouble me] Observing how numerous his enemies had become on every side, David casts himself with full confidence on the protection of Jehovah. It is in a like spirit that the prayer of our Church is framed, 'Give peace in our time, O Lord—Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God.'

3. *My worship*] "My glory." The source of my greatness and power. *Worship* had formerly the sense of honour, and is so used in the Marriage Service, 'With my body I thee worship.' See Luke xiv. 10 ; Ps. viii. 5 ; lxxxiv. 12.

4. *His holy hill*] Mount Zion, where the tabernacle was erected.

7. *Thou smitest, &c.*] To smite the cheek-bone or jaw—and to

8 Salvation belongeth unto the Lord : and thy blessing is upon thy people.

PSALM IV.

ENTIRE AND JOYFUL CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

HEAR me when I call, O God of my righteousness : Thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble ; have mercy upon me, and hearken unto my prayer.

2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine honour : and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing ?

3 Know this also, that the Lord hath chosen to Himself the man that is godly : when I call upon the Lord, He will hear me.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not : commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still.

5 Offer the sacrifice of righteousness : and put your trust in the Lord.

break the teeth—is to destroy the power of an enemy, and take away his means of offence ; as the teeth of wild animals are broken or dashed out, to destroy their power of mischief. Compare Ps. lviii. 6.

8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord*] On God alone can we depend for health and safety, whether of body or soul.

Ps. IV. written probably while David was encompassed with enemies, expresses his unshaken trust in the Divine care and protection. It sets forth the duty of self-examination, and of the prayer of faith. Verse 9, makes it especially suitable for an evening hymn.

1. *O God of my righteousness*] Thou, God, who knowest the justice of my cause, and hast preserved me in the midst of dangers.

2. *Blaspheme mine honour*] Cast

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contempt and ridicule upon me and the high office to which, by Divine favour, I have been exalted.

—*Seek after leasing*] Study and practise deceit.

3. *Know this also, &c.*] But know this, that God Himself (who knoweth my desire to serve Him) and not man, has chosen me to be King.

4. *Stand in awe, &c.*] This clause is translated in the Septuagint, or Greek Version, 'Be ye angry and sin not;' and is so quoted by St. Paul, Ephes. iv. 26. According to this rendering, the meaning is, sin not through anger. Be not angry in such a way, or to such a degree, as may lead you into sin.

—*Commune with your own heart*] Consider with yourself—meditate alone and in secret.

5. *The sacrifice of righteousness*] Sacrifice offered in faith and sincerity, with holy vows and purposes.

6 There be many that say : 'Who will shew us any good ?'

7 Lord, lift Thou up : the light of thy countenance upon us.

8 Thou hast put gladness in my heart : since the time that their corn, and wine, and oil, increased.

9 I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest : for it is Thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety.

PSALM V.

GOD THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE.

PONDER my words, O Lord : consider my meditation.

2 O hearken Thou unto the voice of my calling, my King, and my God : for unto Thee will I make my prayer.

3 My voice shalt Thou hear betimes, O Lord : early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.

4 For Thou art the God that hast no pleasure in wickedness : neither shall any evil dwell with Thee.

5 Such as be foolish shall not stand in thy sight : for Thou hatest all them that work vanity.

Ps. li. 17—19. 'Then shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness.' Deut. xxxiii. 19.

6. *There be many that say*] While many are ready to despair, David trusts in God for deliverance.

8. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart since, &c.*] According to the rendering in the Bible the meaning is, 'Thou hast given me gladness greater than theirs when their corn and wine abound. Spiritual is better and more real than temporal joy. See Deut. xvi. 3.

Ps. V. appears to be a morning hymn addressed with pious confi-

dence to a God holy and just, who abhors violence, cruelty and deceit.

1. *Ponder my words*] To ponder is to weigh—David prays God to give due weight to his cries and entreaties for help and succour.

3. *Will look up*] Will be on the watch, and wait in faith for the answer. Hab. ii. 1.

4. *Thou art the God that hast no pleasure in wickedness*] The same thought is more fully expressed in Hab. i. 13.

5. *Such as be foolish, &c.*] The wicked shall not be able to stand in God's presence. They shall be condemned at His bar. Here and

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing : the Lord will abhor both the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

7 But as for me, I will come into thine house, even upon the multitude of thy mercy : and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

8 Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies : make thy way plain before my face.

9 For there is no faithfulness in his mouth : their inward parts are very wickedness.

10 Their throat is an open sepulchre : they flatter with their tongue.

11 Destroy Thou them, O God ; let them perish through their own imaginations : cast them out in the multitude of their ungodliness ; for they have rebelled against Thee.

12 And let all them that put their trust in Thee rejoice : they shall ever be giving of thanks, because Thou defendest them ; they that love thy Name shall be joyful in Thee ;

13 For thou, Lord, wilt give thy blessing unto the righteous : and with thy favourable kindness wilt Thou defend him as with a shield.

elsewhere by *foolish* we are to understand wicked, because sin and transgression to God's Law are the greatest folly of which man can be guilty.

— *Vanity*] “iniquity.”

6. *Them that speak leasing*] Those who tell lies.

7. *Even upon the multitude of thy mercy*] Through thy great goodness and favour towards me.

8. *In thy righteousness, &c.*] In thy righteous way, for I am in the midst of treacherous enemies who would mislead and betray me.

9. *In his mouth*] In *their* mouth, the mouth of any one of them.

10. *An open sepulchre*] The throat of the wicked which gives forth lies and blasphemies is compared to an open grave, from which arises all manner of foulness and corruption. See Rom. iii. 13.

11. *Destroy Thou them*] The Psalmist calls for, or perhaps only foretells, the Divine judgment, not on his own personal enemies, but on those who oppose, and rebel against, the will of God.

Evening.]

PSALM VI.

[Day 1.

PRAYER IN TROUBLE AND AFFLICTION ACCEPTED.

Proper Psalm for Ash-Wednesday.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thine indignation :
neither chasten me in thy displeasure.

2 Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak : O
Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed.

3 My soul also is sore troubled : but, Lord, how
long wilt Thou punish me ?

4 Turn Thee, O Lord, and deliver my soul : O save
me for thy mercy's sake.

5 For in death no man remembereth Thee : and
who will give Thee thanks in the pit ?

6 I am weary of my groaning ; every night wash
I my bed : and water my couch with my tears.

7 My beauty is gone for very trouble : and worn
away because of all mine enemies.

Ps. VI.—This is the first of the *Penitential* Psalms. There are seven so called, the others being the 32d, 38th, 51st, 102d, 130th, 143d. They are all used in the services of Ash-Wednesday.

1. *In Thine indignation*] "In thine anger." A like petition is found in Jer. x. 24, whence it has been adopted as one of the sentences to be used at the beginning of Morning and Evening Prayer.

2. *My bones are vexed*] My whole frame is shaken. My very bones ache, from the trouble and distress of soul which my sins have occasioned me.

3. *How long wilt Thou punish me*] In the Bible Version it is simply, "But thou, O Lord, how long ?"

5. *For in death no man remembereth Thee*] The same thought

is beautifully expanded in Hezekiah's prayer, Isaiah xxxviii. 18.

— *In the pit*] In Hades, the place of departed spirits. 'Hell,' an old English word, has precisely the same meaning as Hades, namely, a covered or unseen place : in this sense it is used in the Apostles' Creed. 'He descended into Hell,' means that our Lord went down to the unseen world of spirits.

6. *Every night wash I my bed, &c.*] All night I drench my bed, &c. Expressions used to denote extreme anguish of mind or body. See Job vii. 3.

7. *My beauty is gone for very trouble*] "Mine eye is consumed because of grief." See Isaiah liii. 14, where it is said of Him who suffered for the sins of all, 'His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.'

8 Away from me, all ye that work vanity : for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

9 The Lord hath heard my petition : the Lord will receive my prayer.

10 All mine enemies shall be confounded, and sore vexed : they shall be turned back, and put to shame suddenly.

PSALM VII.

APPEAL OF INNOCENCE AGAINST FALSEHOOD AND MALICE.

O LORD my God, in Thee have I put my trust
save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me ;

2 Lest he devour my soul, like a lion, and tear it in pieces : while there is none to help.

3 O Lord my God, if I have done any such thing : or if there be any wickedness in my hands ;

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me : yea I have delivered him that without any cause is mine enemy ;

5 Then let mine enemy persecute my soul, and take me : yea, let him tread my life down upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.

6 Stand up, O Lord, in thy wrath, and lift up thyself, because of the indignation of mine enemies :

8. *Away from me, &c.*] David now suddenly changes his tone—declares that God had heard his prayer, and boldly requires his enemies to leave off their attacks, as he was now again under the protection of Jehovah.

10. *All mine enemies*] It must be remembered that the enemies of David were rebels against him whom God had chosen and anointed King of Israel.

Ps. VII.—Probably written by David when suffering under the

false accusations and bitter persecution of Saul, or some of his partisans. 1 Sam. xviii. 11—21; xxiv.

3. *If I have done any such thing*] If I am guilty of the crime which enemies lay to my charge. David was accused by Saul of conspiring against his life. 1 Sam. xxii. 8—13.

4. *Delivered*] Rather, perhaps, spoiled or plundered. For an instance of David's generous forbearance to Saul when he was in his power, see 1 Sam. xxiv. 11.

6. *The indignation*] The rage and fury.

arise up for me in the judgment that Thou hast commanded.

7 And so shall the congregation of the people come about Thee : for their sakes therefore lift up thyself again.

8 The Lord shall judge the people ; give sentence with me, O Lord : according to my righteousness, and according to the innocency that is in me.

9 O let the wickedness of the ungodly come to an end : but guide Thou the just.

10 For the righteous God : trieth the very hearts and reins.

11 My help cometh of God : who preserveth them that are true of heart.

12 God is a righteous Judge, strong, and patient : and God is provoked every day.

13 If a man will not turn, He will whet his sword : He hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

14 He hath prepared for him the instruments of death : He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

15 Behold, he travaileth with mischief : he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth ungodliness.

6. *Arise up for me in the judgment*] Arise to maintain my cause, and pass a just sentence on my enemies. Or, it may be, arise, Thou who hast ordained judgment. David appeals to Jehovah to do justice in his behalf, inasmuch as He, the Lord, is the author of justice, and the righteous Judge of all the world.

7. *So shall the congregation, &c.*] An open display of the justice of God will bring multitudes to acknowledge and worship Him.

— *Lift up thyself again*] The more exact meaning is, Return on high—or ascend again to thy throne of judgment.

8. *According to my righteousness, &c.*] Inasmuch as I am innocent of the crimes laid to my charge.

10. *reins*] Literally, the kidneys; but meaning the inmost feelings and affections.

14. *Ordaineth his arrows*] Or, Hath prepared for Himself flaming arrows.

15. *He travaileth with mischief*] He, the godless man, is teeming and big with wicked schemes. The language of this verse will be better understood if it be compared with that of Job xv. 35, 'They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity'—and with James i. 15, 'When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin,' &c.

16 He hath graven and digged up a pit : and is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for other.

17 For his travail shall come upon his own head : and his wickedness shall fall on his own pate.

18 I will give thanks unto the Lord, according to his righteousness : and I will praise the Name of the Lord most High.

PSALM VIII.

THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE WORKS OF CREATION.

Proper Psalm for Ascension-Day.

O LORD our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the world : Thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens !

2 Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies : that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

3 For I will consider thy heavens, even the works of

16. *Graven*] Hollowed out.

— *Is fallen himself, &c.*] Saul is an instance of this righteous retribution. He thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines, 1 Sam. xviii. 25; and by the Philistines he was himself overthrown, 1 Sam. xxxi. 1—6. See Ps. ix. 15.

17. *His travail*] His work. The mischief which he was plotting.

— *Shall fall on his own pate*] Shall return upon himself. So 1 Sam. xxv. 39.

Ps. VIII. is a sublime contemplation of the wonderful works of creation—of the weakness and helplessness of man in himself—and of the dignity conferred upon him by being made in God's image; but especially by the manifestation of Jesus Christ in the human form.

1. *How excellent is thy Name*] In other words, How glorious and

excellent art THOU!—the name of the Lord being put in Scripture for the Lord Himself. See Ps. xx. 1; Prov. xviii. 10; Acts iv. 10.

2. *Hast Thou ordained strength*] Thou hast asserted thy power by means of the feeblest instruments. In like manner, St. Paul says, 'God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty,' 1 Cor. i. 27. See also Heb. xi. 34; Matt. xi. 25, xxi. 16. Refer also to Matt. xi. 25; the Collect for the Innocents' Day.

— *Because of thine enemies*] With a view to confound those who oppose themselves, and to still or put to silence the malicious and spiteful enemy. It will be remembered that the youthful David, without spear or shield, overcame the terrible giant Goliath by the power of the Lord of Hosts. 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

thy fingers : the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained.

4 What is man, that Thou art mindful of him : and the son of man, that Thou visitest him ?

5 Thou madest him lower than the angels : to crown him with glory and worship.

6 Thou makest him to have dominion of the works of thy hands : and Thou hast put all things in subjection, under his feet ;

7 All sheep and oxen : yea, and the beasts of the field ;

8 The fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea : and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas.

9 O Lord our Governor : how excellent is thy Name in all the world !

Morning.

PSALM IX.

[*Day 2.*

PRaise FOR PAST, PRAYER FOR FUTURE, MERCIES.

I WILL give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart : I will speak of all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in Thee : yea, my songs will I make of thy Name, O Thou most Highest.

3 While mine enemies are driven back : they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4—8. *What is man, &c.*] This passage, in which God's gracious condescension and love to man are set forth, and the exaltation of human nature in the person of Jesus Christ foreshown, is quoted by St. Paul, Heb. ii. 6—9. See also Gen. i. 26—28 ; 1 Cor. xv. 24—27 ; Ephes. i. 22.

6. *Thou makest him to have dominion, &c.*] Thou gavest him power and rule over all created things.

7. *The beasts of the field*] that is, *The wild beasts.*

Ps. IX. was probably written, after the removal of the ark to Mount Zion, to celebrate some national triumph. The relation of Israel to the surrounding heathen nations is that of the Church of Christ to a wicked or unconverted world ; and the Christian may apply the language of the Israelite as a prayer for the subjection of God's enemies to the law of Christ.

3. *While mine enemies*] Rather, *when my enemies.*

4 For Thou hast maintained my right and my cause :
Thou art set in the throne that judgest right.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and destroyed the
ungodly : Thou hast put out their name for ever and
ever.

6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual
end : even as the cities which thou hast destroyed ;
their memorial is perished with them.

7 But the Lord shall endure for ever : He hath also
prepared his seat for judgment.

8 For He shall judge the world in righteousness
and minister true judgment unto the people.

9 The Lord also will be a defence for the oppressed :
even a refuge in due time of trouble.

10 And they that know thy Name will put their
trust in Thee : for Thou, Lord, hast never failed them
that seek Thee.

11 O praise the Lord which dwelleth in Sion : shew
the People of his doings.

12 For, when He maketh inquisition for blood, He
remembereth them : and forgetteth not the complaint
of the poor.

4. *Thou hast maintained my right and my cause*] The meaning is, Thou hast defended my righteous cause ; or, as we say, my just rights.

5. *The heathen*] The hostile nations.

6. *Destructions are come, &c.*] As to the enemy, his destructions are come to an end—even as the cities which Thou hast overthrown—their very memory has perished.

7. *His seat for judgment*] The tribunal from which he will for ever judge men according to their deservings.

9. *Even a refuge in due time of trouble*] A present, seasonable help in time of trouble : a refuge when most needed.

10. *They that know thy name*] They that acknowledge thy power and mercy.

11. *Shew the people of his doings*] Proclaim his deeds among the nations.

12. *When He maketh inquisition*] When He takes account of the blood which has been shed. See Gen. iv. 10.

— *He remembereth them, &c.*] *Them*—namely, those whose blood had been shed. The Lord in his mercy remembers the poor and the oppressed. He remembers also and will requite the oppressor of his people.

— *The complaint of the poor*] The word complaint occurs very frequently in the Psalms—but

13 Have mercy upon me, O Lord ; consider the trouble which I suffer of them that hate me : Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death.

14 That I may shew all thy praises within the ports of the daughter of Sion : I will rejoice in thy salvation.

15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made : in the same net which they hid privily, is their foot taken.

16 The Lord is known to execute judgment : the ungodly is trapped in the work of his own hands.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell : and all the people that forget God.

18 For the poor shall not alway be forgotten : the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever.

19 Up, Lord, and let not man have the upper hand : let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 Put them in fear, O Lord : that the heathen may know themselves to be but men.

PSALM X.

THE CRY OF THE POOR AGAINST THE OPPRESSOR.

WHY standest Thou so far off, O Lord : and hidest thy face in the needful time of trouble ?

always as an expression of grief, or cry of distress,—never in its more modern sense of murmuring or repining. See, for example, Ps. xvii. 1 ; xviii. 6 ; xxii. 1, &c.

14. *The ports of the daughter of Sion.*] The gates of Jerusalem.

16. *The Lord is known to execute judgment*] “The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth.”

— *The ungodly is trapped, &c.*] Compare Ps. vii. 17.

17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, &c.*] ‘Hell’ here means the place of the dead—and by the *People we are to understand* (as in

Ps. ii. 1) the Peoples,—that is, the Heathen Nations. The whole verse, however, must be taken as a solemn prediction and warning of final death and destruction to all who forget God and serve Him not.

19. *Be judged in thy sight*] Be condemned before Thee.

20. *Put them in fear*] Strike terror into them.

— *To be but men*] Utterly powerless of themselves, and unable to stand against God.

Ps. X. is an appeal to the Most High against the ungodly man,

2 The ungodly for his own lust doth persecute the poor : let them be taken in the crafty wiliness that they have imagined.

3 For the ungodly hath made boast of his own heart's desire : and speaketh good of the covetous, whom God abhorreth.

4 The ungodly is so proud, that he careth not for God : neither is God in all his thoughts.

5 His ways are alway grievous : thy judgments are far above out of his sight, and therefore defieth he all his enemies.

6 For he hath said in his heart, 'Tush, I shall never be cast down : there shall no harm happen unto me.'

7 His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and fraud : under his tongue is ungodliness and vanity.

8 He sitteth lurking in the thievish corners of the streets : and privily in his lurking dens doth he murder the innocent ; his eyes are set against the poor.

9 For he lieth waiting secretly, even as a lion lurketh he in his den : that he may ravish the poor.

whose pride, craft, and tyranny are described in lively terms. The reader will observe how naturally the Psalmist looks up to God, to redress his wrongs, and to avenge him of his adversary; and what confidence he expresses that God will hear his prayers. The Christian has far stronger grounds of assurance that God for Christ's sake will deliver him from his spiritual enemies.

2. *For his own lust*] In his pride of heart.

— *Let them be taken, &c.*] Let them—the ungodly—'be trapped in the work of their own hands.' Refer to Ps. ix. 16.

3. *The ungodly hath made boast of his own heart's desire*] The ungodly man glories in fulfilling and satisfying his own evil desires and

passions. Phil. iii. 19. He applauds himself for his gains, and despises God. Compare Hab. i. 16.

5. *His ways are alway grievous*] The meaning seems rather to be, His ways are firm and unmoved. He is looked upon as a prosperous man because he is permitted to remain so long unpunished. Ps. lxxiii. 4—7.

7. *Under his tongue*] In allusion to the poison of serpents, which is concealed under their teeth.

8. *In the thievish corners, &c.*] This verse is rendered in the B. V. "He sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages : in the secret places doth he murder the innocent."

9. *As a lion lurketh he, &c.*] Compare Job xxxviii. 39, 40.

— *Ravish*] Seize and plunder.

10 He doth ravish the poor : when he getteth him into his net.

11 He falleth down, and humbleth himself : that the congregation of the poor may fall into the hands of his captains.

12 He hath said in his heart, 'Tush, God hath forgotten : He hideth away his face, and He will never see it.'

13 Arise, O Lord God, and lift up thine hand : forget not the poor.

14 Wherefore should the wicked blaspheme God : while he doth say in his heart, 'Tush, Thou God carest not for it.'

15 Surely Thou hast seen it : for Thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong.

16 That Thou mayest take the matter into thine hand : the poor committeth himself unto Thee ; for Thou art the helper of the friendless.

17 Break Thou the power of the ungodly and malicious : take away his ungodliness, and Thou shalt find none.

18 The Lord is King for ever and ever : and the heathen are perished out of the land.

19 Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the poor : Thou preparest their heart, and thine ear hearkeneth thereto ;

20 To help the fatherless and poor unto their right :

11. *He falleth down, &c.*] Employing for his purposes craft as well as violence. "He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones ;" or be caught in his gripe.

12. *Tush, God hath forgotten, &c.*] Compare Job xxii. 13, 14.

16. *Take the matter into thine hand*] That is, undertake the cause of the poor and oppressed.

— *The friendless*] "The fatherless."

17. *Take away his ungodliness*] Track out his wickedness, till there be no more to discover.

18. *Out of the land*] Rather, from off *His* land. By the heathen we may understand not only the idolatrous Canaanites, but the enemies of God generally. Refer to Ps. xxxvii. 9.

19. *Thou preparest their heart*] Rather, perhaps, Thou strengthenest and establishest their heart. Ps. xxxi. 27.

that the man of the earth be no more exalted against them.

PSALM XI.

TRUST IN GOD IN TIMES OF DANGER AND PERPLEXITY.

IN the Lord put I my trust : how say ye then to my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the hill ?

2 For lo, the ungodly bend their bow, and make ready their arrows within the quiver : that they may privily shoot at them which are true of heart.

3 For the foundations will be cast down : and what hath the righteous done ?

4 The Lord is in his holy temple : the Lord's seat is in heaven.

5 His eyes consider the poor : and his eyelids try the children of men.

6 The Lord alloweth the righteous : but the ungodly, and him that delighteth in wickedness, doth his soul abhor.

7 Upon the ungodly He shall rain snares, fire and

20. *That the man of the earth, &c.*] That man, a creature of the earth, may no longer be permitted to tyrannize over the weak and friendless.

Ps. XI. seems to have been composed by David on some occasion of extreme danger, perhaps when forewarned by Jonathan of Saul's intention to kill him. See 1 Sam. xix. 2.

2. *For lo, &c.*] The reason for flight is that even now thine enemies are aiming their arrows at thee.

— *Within the quiver.*] Better "upon the string."

3. *For the foundations, &c.*] David's friends urge him to fly by asking what the righteous man, the servant of God, can do when the foundation of all right and justice is overthrown? Compare Ps. lxx.

4; lxxii. 5. David replies, he must still hold fast his faith in God's over-ruling Providence, for assuredly *The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's seat is in heaven.*

5. *His eyes consider, &c.*] God sees and marks both the sufferings of the afflicted, and the most secret designs of the wicked.

6. *Alloweth*] This word is derived from the old Norman-English, 'allouer' (Latin, *allaudare*), and means, approveth, or justifieth. Ref. to Luke xi. 48; Rom. vii. 15; xiv. 22; 1 Thess. ii. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7, all of which passages will be better understood, by bearing in mind the use of this word in old English. It occurs in the same sense in the Baptismal Service, 'He favourably *alloweth*.'

7. *Shall rain . . . fire and brimstone, &c.*] As he did upon the

brimstone, storm and tempest : this shall be their portion to drink.

8 For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness : his countenance will behold the thing that is just.

Evening.]

PSALM XII.

[*Day 2.*

APPEAL TO GOD FOR HELP AGAINST TREACHEROUS MEN.

HELP me, Lord, for there is not one godly man left : for the faithful are minished from among the children of men.

2 They talk of vanity every one with his neighbour : they do but flatter with their lips, and dissemble in their double heart.

3 The Lord shall root out all deceitful lips : and the tongue that speaketh proud things ;

4 Which have said, 'With our tongue will we prevail : we are they that ought to speak, who is lord over us ?'

5 Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy : and because of the deep sighing of the poor,

6 'I will up,' saith the Lord : 'and will help every one from him that swelleth against him, and will set him at rest.'

7 The words of the Lord are pure words : even as

wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. xix. 24.

8. *His countenance will behold*] He will regard with favour : or, as others translate, The upright shall behold his face.

Psa. XII.—David laments the decay of piety, and the prevalence of treachery and ungodliness. He appeals to God to uphold the cause of truth and righteousness. This Psalm suits the case of a Christian surrounded by wicked companions.

1. *Minished*] Diminished, reduced in number.

2. *They talk of vanity*] They

speak deceitfully.

3. *All deceitful lips, &c.*] The Lord will destroy liars, double-tongued flatterers, and proud boasters.

4. *We are they that ought to speak*] "Our lips are our own," we will say what we please.

5. *Now for the comfortless, &c.*] God here announces his readiness to redress the wrongs of the poor, and to comfort them under their affliction.

7. *Even as the silver, &c.*] The comparison is this : The words of the Lord are free from all falsehood and insincerity—even as silver by

the silver, which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire.

8 Thou shalt keep them, O Lord : Thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever.

9 The ungodly walk on every side : when they are exalted, the children of men are put to rebuke.

PSALM XIII.

PRAYER IN DEJECTION OF SPIRITS.

HOW long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord ? for ever : how long wilt Thou hide thy face from me ?

2 How long shall I seek counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart : how long shall mine enemies triumph over me ?

3 Consider, and hear me, O Lord my God : lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death.

4 Lest mine enemy say, 'I have prevailed against him' : for if I be cast down, they that trouble me will rejoice at it.

5 But my trust is in thy mercy : and my heart is joyful in thy salvation.

6 I will sing of the Lord, because He hath dealt so

being subjected to the action of fire is purified from all earthy matter and alloy.

8. *Thou shalt preserve him*] Rather *them*, the poor, or the faithful as in ver. 1.

9. *The ungodly walk on every side*] That is, The ungodly abound on all sides; when they rise to power, those subject to them are oppressed. *Or*, The wicked stalk about openly, when the vilest of the sons of men are exalted.

Ps. XIII.—Written by David probably when he was reduced to great straits by the persecution of Saul.

2. *How long shall I seek counsel,*

&c.] How long shall I be so perplexed with doubt,—or compelled to cast about for means of deliverance, and be at a loss what course to take?

3. *Lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death*] Revive and deliver me lest I perish, or sleep the sleep of death. See 1 Sam. xiv. 27.

5. *Thy salvation*] The salvation which Thou hast wrought for me.

6. *I will sing of the Lord, &c.*] It would seem as if David's prayer had already been granted—since the complaints of the first verses are turned into confidence and rejoicings in the last.

lovingly with me : yea, I will praise the name of the Lord Most Highest.

PSALM XIV.

THE CORRUPTION AND WICKEDNESS OF UNBELIEVERS.

THE fool hath said in his heart : 'There is no God.'

2 They are corrupt, and become abominable in their doings : there is none that doeth good, no not one.

3 The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men : to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God.

4 But they are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become abominable : there is none that doeth good, no not one.

5 Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they deceived : the poison of asps is under their lips.

6 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness : their feet are swift to shed blood.

7 Destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known : there is no fear of God before their eyes.

8 Have they no knowledge, that they are all such

Ps. XIV. is an awful warning of the consequences of unbelief. Utter corruption of life, blasphemy, lying, alandering, and murder are the sins of the natural man when he has once cast off the fear of God. For a practical comment on this Psalm (which is almost the same as the fifty-third) see Rom. i. 28—32.

2. *They*] The fools—they who are blinded by unbelief : against this fatal delusion St. Paul solemnly warns his brethren according to the flesh :—'Take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.' Heb. iii. 12. See also Rom. i. 21.

3. *The Lord looked down from heaven*] 'And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.' Gen. vi. 12.

— *That would understand*] More correctly, that acted wisely, that sought after God.

5. *Asps*] An asp is a small venomous serpent.

5—7.] These verses are not in the Bible translation, but are quoted by St. Paul, Rom. iii. 13—18, from a translation (called the Septuagint) of the Old Testament into Greek, which was made 277 years before Christ.

workers of mischief : eating up my people as it were bread, and call not upon the Lord ?

9 There were they brought in great fear, even where no fear was : for God is in the generation of the righteous.

10 As for you, ye have made a mock at the counsel of the poor : because he putteth his trust in the Lord.

11 Who shall give salvation unto Israel out of Zion ? When the Lord turneth the captivity of his people : then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

Morning.

PSALM XV.

[*Day 3.*

THE PATTERN OF A TRUE MEMBER OF THE CHURCH.

Proper Psalm for Ascension Day.

LORD, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle : or who shall rest upon thy holy hill ?

8. *Have they no knowledge*] Are they, those workers of iniquity, so ignorant, so blinded by the folly of unbelief ? (ver. 1.)

— *Eating up my people, &c.*] Devouring God's servants with as much indifference as they eat their ordinary food.

9. *Where no fear was*] Judgment comes suddenly upon them, even in the midst of their false security. Job xv. 21 ; 1 Thess. v. 3.

— *For God is in the generation of the righteous*] The terror of the wicked is occasioned by the fact that God is ever present with his own people to help and deliver them.

10. *You*] The enemies of God.

11. *Who shall give salvation*] "Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion." See Ps. liii. 6.

— *When the Lord turneth*] As these are the words of David, they cannot refer to the Babylonish captivity, but seem used to signify restoration from a state of oppres-

sion and distress. The same expression occurs, Job xlii. 10, 'And the Lord turned the captivity of Job.' The spiritual meaning of the passage will therefore be, When the Lord shall deliver his people from the bondage of their sins. 'Though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us.' See Occasional Prayers.

Ps. XV.—As the preceding Psalm describes the character of the unbeliever and ungodly, so this Psalm exhibits the pattern of the true servant of God. It may perhaps have been composed for the occasion of carrying up the Ark to Mount Zion. By appointing it as one of the proper Psalms for Ascension Day the Church teaches us to read in it the lesson so fully taught in the Gospel, that none but the holy, the humble, and the lovers and doers of truth shall ascend to the heavenly Sion, and dwell with Christ in the presence of the Father. Matt. v. 3—8 ; vii. 21 ; Rev. xxi. 27.

2 Even he that leadeth an uncorrupt life : and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

3 He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour : and hath not slandered his neighbour.

4 He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes : and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.

5 He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not : though it were to his own hindrance.

6 He that hath not given his money upon usury : nor taken reward against the innocent.

7 Whoso doeth these things : shall never fall.

PSALM XVI.

PRESENT CONTENTMENT AND FUTURE GLORY.

PRESERVE me, O God : for in Thee have I put my trust.

2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord : 'Thou art my God ; my goods are nothing unto Thee.'

3 All my delight is upon the saints, that are in the earth : and upon such as excel in virtue.

4. *He that setteth not by himself*] He that doth not *make much* of himself, nor 'think of himself more highly than he ought to think.' Rom. xii. 8 ; see also Matt. xiv. 11. The Bible gives a somewhat different, and probably more accurate, rendering of the passage: "In whose eyes a vile person is contemned ; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord."

6. *Hath not given his money upon usury*] The practice condemned is not that of lending money on interest to a merchant to trade with, but that of extorting usurious interest from the necessities of a poor brother ; and *this was strictly for-*

bidden by the law of Moses. See Exod. xxii. 25 ; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20 ; xxiv. 10—13.

6. *Reward*] That is, a bribe to bear false witness against, or in any way oppress, an innocent man.

Ps. XVI.—David expresses his entire dependence upon Jehovah, his abhorrence of idolatry, his thankfulness for the lot assigned to him in this life, and his joyful hope of a future resurrection.

2. *My goods are nothing unto Thee*] My good, that is, my chief happiness, is not without, or independent of, Thee ; nay, rather it is wholly in Thee who art my highest good. See Psalm lxxiii. 24.

4 But they that run after another god : shall have great trouble.

5 Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer : neither make mention of their names within my lips.

6 The Lord Himself is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup : Thou shalt maintain my lot.

7 The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground : yea, I have a goodly heritage.

8 I will thank the Lord for giving me warning : my reins also chasten me in the night-season.

9 I have set God always before me : for He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.

10 Wherefore my heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced : my flesh also shall rest in hope.

11 For why ? Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell : neither shalt Thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

12 Thou shalt shew me the path of life ; in thy

5. *Their drink-offerings, &c.*] I will be no party to their offerings of blood ; I will not even pronounce the names of their idol-gods.

6. *The portion of mine inheritance*] My wealth and my condition are what the Lord assigns to me. The allusion is to the Lord's provision for the Levites. Num. xviii. 20 ; Deut. x. 9.

— *My cup*] It was a custom at ancient feasts for the master of the family to set before his guests cups filled with their several portions. To this custom allusion is made, Ps. xi. 7 ; xxiii. 5 ; lxxv. 9 ; Matt. xx. 12. Consider also the words of our Lord during his agony in the garden, 'The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?' John xviii. 11.

— *Shalt maintain my lot*] Sustain me in my rightful inheritance. Josh. xix. 51. Support me in that state of life to which Thou hast called me.

7. *The lot is fallen unto me*] A

pleasant country and sphere have been measured out to me by line ; but David had declared in the preceding verse, 'The Lord Himself is my portion.' See Lam. iii. 24.

8. *For giving me warning*] For pointing out the path which I should choose, and revealing Himself as my guide and counsellor.

— *My reins also chasten me, &c.*] My secret thoughts remind me of the duty of cleaving steadfastly to God's laws and devoting myself to his service.

9. *For He is*] Because He is.

10. *My glory*] That is, My soul, or it may be, My tongue.

11. *Hell*] Hades—the place of departed spirits. Ps. xlix. 15. St. Peter (Acts ii. 31) declares that 'David here spake of the resurrection of Christ.' See also Acts xiii. 35.

12. *The path of life*] God in his infinite mercy opened the way of life eternal by the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

presence is the fulness of joy : and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore.

PSALM XVII.

PRAYER OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN.

HEAR the right, O Lord, consider my complaint : and hearken unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.

2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence : and let thine eyes look upon the thing that is equal.

3 Thou hast proved and visited mine heart in the night-season ; Thou hast tried me, and shalt find no wickedness in me : for I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend.

4 Because of men's works, that are done against the words of thy lips : I have kept me from the ways of the destroyer.

5 O hold Thou up my goings in thy paths : that my footsteps slip not.

6 I have called upon Thee, O God, for Thou shalt hear me : incline thine ear to me, and hearken unto my words.

Ps. XVII. is "a Prayer of David," uttered apparently in the midst of dangers from his persecutors. With regard to the language of it, we must regard him, not as boasting of his own righteousness, but as appealing to God, who knew his innocence and the justice of his cause, to deliver him from the hands of his enemies. That he did not trust in his own strength is proved by the humble petitions for Divine support at verse 5.

1. *Hear the right, O Lord*] 'We know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him He heareth.' *John ix. 31* ; see also

James v. 16.

1. *Feigned*] False, deceitful.

2. *My sentence*] The judgment of me and of my cause.

— *The thing that is equal*] That which is just and true ; in other words, honesty and uprightness.

3. *Thou hast proved*] David does not fear to appeal to God's knowledge of the sincerity and uprightness of his heart.

— *In the night-season*] Compare Ps. iv. 4 ; xvi. 8.

4. *Because of men's works*] As concerning the sinful courses of men, Hosea v. 7. I have, by obeying thy word, been careful to avoid the ways of the transgressor. See Ps. cxix. 11.

7 Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, Thou that art the Saviour of them which put their trust in Thee : from such as resist thy right hand.

8 Keep me as the apple of an eye : hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

9 From the ungodly that trouble me : mine enemies compass me round about to take away my soul.

10 They are inclosed in their own fat : and their mouth speaketh proud things.

11 They lie waiting in our way on every side : turning their eyes down to the ground ;

12 Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey : and as it were a lion's whelp, lurking in secret places.

13 Up, Lord, disappoint him, and cast him down : deliver my soul from the ungodly, which is a sword of thine ;

14 From the men of thy hand, O Lord, from the men, I say, and from the evil world : which have their portion in this life, whose bellies Thou fillest with thy hid treasure.

15 They have children at their desire : and leave the rest of their substance for their babes.

8. *Keep me as the apple of an eye*] Guard me with the same care as the pupil, the most tender and sensitive part, of the eye is protected from injury. Deut. xxxii. 10; Zech. ii. 8.

9. *From the ungodly that trouble me*] "From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies who compass me about."

10. *They are inclosed in their own fat*] The pampered and bloated body denotes pride, sensuality, and moral deadness.

11. *Turning their eyes down to the ground*] Looking and watching how they may cast me down.

12. *In secret places*] That is, in his covert where he lies concealed, watching his opportunity to spring upon his prey.

13. *A sword of thine*] The wicked are instruments of vengeance in the hand of God. So Isa. x. 5. 'O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger.'

14. *From the men of thy hand*] From the men of the world, who are instruments in thy hand.

— *Thy hid treasure*] Good things in abundance, as if drawn from some hidden store. Such men as are here described, have *their portion in this life*; in other words, 'they in their life-time receive their good things;' 'they walk in the ways of their heart, and in the sight of their eyes, but for all these things God will bring them into judgment.' See Ps. lxxiii. 12; Eccl. xi. 6; and Luke xvi. 26.

15. *They have children at their*

16 But as for me, I will behold thy presence in righteousness : and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.

Evening.]

PSALM XVIII.

[Day 3.]

A SONG OF VICTORY AND THANKSGIVING.

I WILL love Thee, O Lord, my strength ; the Lord is my stony rock, and my defence : my Saviour, my God, and my might, in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my refuge.

2 I will call upon the Lord, which is worthy to be praised : so shall I be safe from mine enemies.

3 The sorrows of death compassed me : and the overflowings of ungodliness made me afraid.

4 The pains of hell came about me : the snares of death overtook me.

5 In my trouble I will call upon the Lord : and complain unto my God.

desire] They have a numerous family, and leave to their children's children, what neither they nor their sons, with all their extravagance, have been able to squander.

16. *But as for me*] But for my part, instead of looking for happiness to anything which this world can afford, I will seek it in God's presence alone, where is fulness of joy.

— *When I awake up, &c.*] 'I, when I awake from the sleep of death, shall have my full satisfaction in thy image, and in being made like unto Thee.' See 1 John iii. 2.

Ps. XVIII.—'David spake unto the Lord the words of this song, in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul.' 2 Sam. xxii. 1. The chap-

ter which follows is, with a few variations, the same as this Psalm. The date of it is about B.C. 1018.

1. *Buckler*] A small shield ; so called either from the leather of which it was made, or from the *buckle* with which it was fastened to the arm.

— *The horn of my salvation*] A common figure derived from the horn of animals, which is their defence and protection.

3. *Overflowings of ungodliness*] "The floods of ungodly men."

4. *The pains of hell*] The fears and perils of the grave. See Acts ii. 24.

5. *I will call, &c.*] It seems better in this and the next verse to adopt the past tense, according to the Bible Version, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God : He heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before Him, even into his ears."

6 So shall He hear my voice out of his holy temple : and my complaint shall come before Him ; it shall enter even into his ears.

7 The earth trembled and quaked : the very foundations also of the hills shook and were removed, because He was wroth.

8 There went a smoke out in his presence : and a consuming fire out of his mouth, so that coals were kindled at it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down : and it was dark under his feet.

10 He rode upon the cherubims, and did fly : He came flying upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his secret place : his pavilion round about Him with dark water, and thick clouds to cover Him.

12 At the brightness of his presence his clouds removed : hailstones, and coals of fire.

13 The Lord also thundered out of heaven, and the Highest gave his thunder : hailstones and coals of fire.

14 He sent out his arrows, and scattered them : He cast forth lightnings, and destroyed them.

15 The springs of waters were seen, and the foundations of the round world were discovered, at thy chiding, O Lord : at the blasting of the breath of thy displeasure.

16 He shall send down from on high to fetch me : and shall take me out of many waters.

7. *The earth trembled*] Verses 7—19 contain a sublime description of the interposition of Jehovah in behalf of David. Compare Exod. xix. 16.

8. *Out in his presence*] "Out of his nostrils."

9. *He bowed the heavens...and came down*] He descended, as it were, upon the clouds of heaven.

— *And it was dark under his feet*] The Bible Version has in this place more of the spirit of poetry ;

"and darkness was under his feet."

15. *Were discovered*] Were uncovered or laid bare. The allusion is probably to the path which was made over the bottom of the Red Sea by the 'strong east wind' (Exod. xiv. 21), or, as we read in the Bible Version of this Psalm, "at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils."

16. *He shall send down, &c.*] The Bible Version employs the past

17 He shall deliver me from my strongest enemy, and from them which hate me : for they are too mighty for me.

18 They prevented me in the day of my trouble : but the Lord was my upholder.

19 He brought me forth also into a place of liberty : He brought me forth, even because He had a favour unto me.

20 The Lord shall reward me after my righteous dealing : according to the cleanness of my hands shall He recompense me.

21 Because I have kept the ways of the Lord : and have not forsaken my God, as the wicked doth.

22 For I have an eye unto all his laws : and will not cast out his commandments from me.

23 I was also uncorrupt before Him : and eschewed mine own wickedness.

24 Therefore shall the Lord reward me after my righteous dealing : and according unto the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.

25 With the holy Thou shalt be holy : and with a perfect man Thou shalt be perfect ;

tense in this and the following verse. Thus :—"He sent from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters;" or, as we say, out of a sea of troubles and difficulties.

18. *They prevented*] Surprised or came suddenly upon me, getting before me wherever I turned.

20. *The Lord shall reward me*] "The Lord hath rewarded me:" and again in the same verse, "Hath He recompensed me."

20—24. *My righteous dealing*] David is here, probably, referring to his conduct in the matters between himself and Saul; but even if he be understood to assert his own righteousness more generally, it must be remembered that he was *the chosen and anointed champion*

of Jehovah against the heathen, and was constant to the worship of the one true God. That he did not mean to claim exemption from the sinfulness and corruption which attach to every child of Adam alike, is clear from many places in his own Psalms. See especially Psalm li. 5.

23. *Eschewed*] Renounced my own wickedness. David felt the inward temptation to sin, but withstood it. See 1 Kings xiv. 8, and xv. 5.

25. *With the holy, &c.*] "With the merciful Thou wilt shew thyself merciful." God's dealings with men will be according to their actions and dispositions. Matt. vii. 2; Gal. vi. 8.

26 With the clean Thou shalt be clean : and with the froward Thou shalt learn frowardness.

27 For Thou shalt save the people that are in adversity : and shalt bring down the high looks of the proud.

28 Thou also shalt light my candle : the Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light.

29 For in Thee I shall discomfit an host of men : and with the help of my God I shall leap over the wall.

30 The way of God is an undefiled way : the word of the Lord also is tried in the fire ; He is the defender of all them that put their trust in Him.

31 For who is God, but the Lord : or who hath any strength, except our God ?

32 It is God that girdeth me with strength of war : and maketh my way perfect.

33 He maketh my feet like harts' feet : and setteth me up on high.

34 He teacheth mine hands to fight : and mine arms shall break even a bow of steel.

35 Thou hast given me the defence of thy salvation : thy right hand also shall hold me up, and thy loving correction shall make me great.

26. *With the froward*] To the wilful Thou provest thyself stern and severe. Lev. xxvi. 23, 24.

28. *Thou also shalt light my candle*] Shalt restore me to joy and prosperity, of which a lighted lamp is the emblem. Job xviii. 5, 6 ; Ps. xxvii. 1 ; cxii. 4 ; Prov. xxiv. 20. See Third Collect at Evening Prayer, 'Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord.'

29. *Discomfit*] Defeat.

— *I shall leap over the wall*] I have scaled and passed as a conqueror over the walls of fenced cities.

31. *Who hath any strength*] "Who is a rock." See 1 Sam. ii. 2.

32. *My way perfect*] My path plain and safe.

33. *Maketh my feet like harts' feet, &c.*] Endues me with swiftness to pursue and overtake my enemies ; and enables me, like the hart, to stand firmly on my high places. Compare 2 Sam. ii. 18.

35. *Thy loving correction*] God builds up his servants by the merciful discipline of trial and chastisement. See Deut. viii. 16 ; Heb. xii. 6 ; Rev. iii. 19.

35—38. *Shall hold me up, &c.*] In these verses, as well as in verses 41—43, the verb in B.V. is, perhaps

more consistently, in the past tense.

"Thy gentleness hath made me

36 Thou shalt make room enough under me for to go : that my footsteps shall not slide.

37 I will follow upon mine enemies, and overtake them : neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them.

38 I will smite them, that they shall not be able to stand : but fall under my feet.

39 Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle : Thou shalt throw down mine enemies under me.

40 Thou hast made mine enemies also to turn their backs upon me : and I shall destroy them that hate me.

41 They shall cry, but there shall be none to help them : yea, even unto the Lord shall they cry, but He shall not hear them.

42 I will beat them as small as the dust before the wind : I will cast them out as the clay in the streets.

43 Thou shalt deliver me from the strivings of the people : and Thou shalt make me the head of the heathen.

44 A people whom I have not known : shall serve me.

45 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me : but the strange children shall dissemble with me.

great." "Thou hast enlarged my steps," &c.

36. *Room enough under me for to go*] Thou hast opened before me a clear and broad path.

— *That my footsteps shall not slide*] We may perhaps discover in this verse an allusion to David's perilous flights over mountain paths and down steep precipices.

37—45.] The victorious course of David seems in these verses to be prophetic of the spiritual victories of the Messiah.

37. *I will follow upon mine enemies*] *1 Sam. xxx. 8.*

41. *He shall not hear them*] He will no longer listen to their prayer for mercy ; for the time of judgment is come. Read *Prov. i. 24—31.*

42. *As small as the dust*] Compare *Matt. xxi. 44.*

43. *Head of the heathen*] A title or description still more applicable to the Messiah than to David. See *Isa. lx. 12.*

45. *The strange children, &c.*] The sons of the alien, that is, the heathen nations, shall feign submission through fear.

46 The strange children shall fail : and be afraid out of their prisons.

47 The Lord liveth ; and blessed be my strong helper : and praised be the God of my salvation.

48 Even the God that seeth that I be avenged : and subdueth the people unto me.

49 It is He that delivereth me from my cruel enemies, and setteth me up above mine adversaries : Thou shalt rid me from the wicked man.

50 For this cause will I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the Gentiles : and sing praises unto thy Name.

51 Great prosperity giveth He unto his King : and sheweth loving-kindness unto David his Anointed, and unto his seed for evermore.

Morning.]

PSALM XIX.

[Day 4.]

THE HEAVENS GOD'S TEACHERS TO ALL NATIONS.

Proper Psalm for Christmas Day.

THE heavens declare the glory of God : and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.

46. *Shall fail, and be afraid out of their prisons]* The strangers fade away ; they are struck with fear even within the strong places in which they have shut themselves up.

49. *Thou shalt rid me from the wicked man]* "Thou hast delivered me from the violent man," (Saul).

50. *For this cause will I give thanks]* This verse is quoted by St. Paul, Rom. xv. 9, as foreshowing that the Gentiles would one day glorify God for his mercy in Christ.

51. *Great prosperity, &c.]* "Great deliverance giveth He to his King," that is, to David, who was by the Divine command anointed to be King ; and unto *his seed*, or descendants, but chiefly to his Son

and Lord Messiah 'whose kingdom shall have no end.'

Ps. XIX.—By appointing this Psalm to be read on Christmas Day, the Church teaches us to regard the Sun of the Visible Universe as an emblem of 'the Sun of Righteousness,' (Mal. iv. 2) that 'true Light' which was 'to lighten every man that cometh into the world' (John i. 9). Verses 7—11 point to a yet clearer revelation which the Great Creator has made of himself and of his will in his own written Word. They show too the blessed effects of that Word when received into the heart.

1. *His handy-work]* The work of his hands, his creative power.

2 One day telleth another : and one night certifieth another.

3 There is neither speech nor language : but their voices are heard among them.

4 Their sound is gone out into all lands : and their words into the ends of the world.

5 In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun : which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course.

6 It goeth forth from the uttermost part of the heaven, and runneth about unto the end of it again : and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes.

2. *One day telleth another, &c.* "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." It is as if one day proclaimed to another the wonders of Almighty power, and thus an unbroken strain of praise to the glory of God was kept up day and night from generation to generation. So too, the seraphim are represented as crying one to another, and resting not, day and night. Isa. vi. 3; Rev. iv. 8.

3. *There is neither speech, &c.* No sound is heard; but, though silent, they bear the plainest testimony to the power and glory of their Almighty Creator. Compare Rom. i. 19, 20.

4. *Their sound is gone out* God reveals Himself by the works of creation throughout the world. St. Paul cites the words as applicable to the universal proclamation of the Gospel. See Rom. x. 18.

5. *A tabernacle* The tent of the

traveller or pilgrim. The sun is represented first as a bridegroom, under which figure our Lord Jesus Christ is often described (see John iii. 29); secondly, as a *giant*, or "strong man" starting from his home in the centre of the heavens, and returning to it in the evening when his race is run. Compare Eccl. i. 5.

6. *Runneth about unto the end of it* The course of the sun is from one end of heaven to the other—from east to farthest west.

7, 8. *The law of the Lord, &c.* The word of God is the spiritual sun, which enlightens the mind and rejoices the heart of mankind.

— *The testimony of the Lord* The Holy Scriptures in which God gives witness of Himself and makes known his will.

— *The simple* The sincere, and true-hearted. Those who are free from guile and who think no evil.

8. *Giveth light unto the eyes*

9 The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever : the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb.

11 Moreover, by them is thy servant taught : and in keeping of them there is great reward.

12 Who can tell how oft he offendeth : O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults.

13 Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me : so shall I be undefiled, and innocent from the great offence.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart : be alway acceptable in thy sight,

15 O Lord : my strength, and my redeemer.

PSALM XX.

PRAYER FOR THE KING ON THE EVE OF BATTLE.

THE Lord hear thee in the day of trouble : the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee ;

The prayer of the Psalmist in another place is, 'Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law.' Ps. cxix. 18. See Collect for St. John the Evangelist's day; 1 Cor. ii. 14; and Ephes. i. 18.

9. *The fear of the Lord is clean*] To fear God, is to reverence his holy law, and to keep ourselves from offending against it, not only in action, but also in word and thought. The fear of God tends to *cleanse* the heart, and to restrain us from sin and impurity.

10. *The honey-comb*] Or, as in the margin of the Bible Version, "the dropping of honey-combs."

12. *My secret faults*] Faults and offences which are hidden from the world; as evil thoughts and

desires, pride, sloth, self-indulgence, covetousness, and the 'negligences and ignorances' for which we beseech God's pardon in the Litany.

13. *Presumptuous*] Wilful and deliberate, sins.

— *The great offence*] "The great transgression." Rebellion against God, and open defiance of his law. Some understand it to mean simply, much iniquity. Verses 12 and 13 form a prayer which should be always in the heart, and often on the lips of the Christian.

Ps. XX. is a beautiful example of the intercession of a people for their sovereign.

1. Day of trouble] The time of distress and adversity.

2 Send thee help from the sanctuary : and strengthen thee out of Sion ;

3 Remember all thy offerings : and accept thy burnt-sacrifice ;

4 Grant thee thy heart's desire : and fulfil all thy mind.

5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and triumph in the Name of the Lord our God : the Lord perform all thy petitions.

6 Now know I, that the Lord helpeth his Anointed, and will hear him from his holy heaven : even with the wholesome strength of his right hand.

7 Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses : but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God.

8 They are brought down, and fallen : but we are risen, and stand upright.

9 Save, Lord, and hear us, O King of heaven : when we call upon Thee.

2. *From the sanctuary*] Meaning, of course, from the tabernacle in which was the mercy-seat.

3. *Remember all thy offerings*] It was the custom of the Israelites, before entering upon a campaign or a battle, to offer sacrifices unto the Lord. 1 Sam. xiii. 8, 9.

5. *In thy salvation*] In thy preservation from danger—and victory over thine enemies.

—*Triumph*] “Set up our banners.”

6. *The wholesome strength*] The power which makes whole, or restores to a sound and healthy state. The Bible Version has “the saving strength.”

7. *Some put their trust, &c.*] No lesson was more earnestly and repeatedly impressed upon the hearts

of the Israelites than that of trusting for success and victory not on the might of their armies, but on the favour and protection of Jehovah, the God of battles. See Deut. xvii. 16; Isa. xxi. 1.

9. *Save, Lord, and hear us, &c.*] A different translation of this verse supplies the well-known petitions of our Morning and Evening Prayers—

‘O Lord, save the King.

‘And mercifully hear us when we call upon Thee.’

Ps. XXI.—This Psalm is the voice of thanksgiving to God for answering the prayers of his people, as contained in Ps. xx. It has further reference to the reign of the Messiah.

PSALM XXI.

PRAYER ANSWERED.—THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY.

Proper Psalm for Ascension Day.

THE King shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord :
exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation.

2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire : and hast
not denied him the request of his lips.

3 For Thou shalt prevent him with the blessings of
goodness : and shalt set a crown of pure gold upon his
head.

4 He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest him a long
life : even for ever and ever.

5 His honour is great in thy salvation : glory and
great worship shalt Thou lay upon him.

6 For Thou shalt give him everlasting felicity : and
make him glad with the joy of thy countenance.

7 And why? because the King putteth his trust
in the Lord : and in the mercy of the Most Highest
he shall not miscarry.

1. *Thy salvation*] The protection and safety which Thou, Lord, hast afforded him.

3. *Thou shalt prevent*] That is, go before him with blessings, granting before he asks. The word has the same meaning in the Collect, '*Prevent* us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour.'

— *A crown of pure gold, &c.*] Some have supposed that allusion is here made to the golden crown which David took from the head of the king of Ammon, and placed upon his own, 2 Sam. xii. 30; but it is safer to regard the expression as a figure of the kingdom which was given to David; and then, further, as a type of the kingdom of Christ hereafter to be established.

4. *He asked life of Thee*] Here we have the petition, as contained

in the preceding Psalm, granted.

4. *Thou gavest him a long life, &c.*] Not only length of days to David, and the establishment of his throne in his posterity, but the promise of the everlasting reign of Christ the Son of David. See Ps. lxxxix. 4; Dan. vii. 14.

5. *His honour is great in thy salvation*] It is his glory to have been saved and delivered by Thee; his especial glory that the salvation to be wrought for men will be in his seed.

6. *Everlasting felicity*] Happiness which shall have no end. The translation in the margin of the Bible Version is, "Thou hast set him to be blessings for ever." Verses 4—6 seem, by the largeness of their promises, to be prophetic of the Son of David, the Messiah. 2 Sam. vii. 16, 29.

7. *In the mercy, &c.*] "Through

8 All thine enemies shall feel thy hand : thy right hand shall find out them that hate thee.

9 Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven in time of thy wrath : the Lord shall destroy them in his displeasure, and the fire shall consume them.

10 Their fruit shalt thou root out of the earth : and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended mischief against thee : and imagined such a device as they are not able to perform.

12 Therefore shalt thou put them to flight : and the strings of thy bow shalt thou make ready against the face of them.

13 Be Thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength : so will we sing, and praise thy power.

Evening.]

PSALM XXII.

[Day 4.]

CHRIST ON THE CROSS.—THE CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES.

Proper Psalm for Good Friday.

MY God, my God, look upon me ; why hast Thou forsaken me : and art so far from my health, and from the words of my complaint ?

the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved." See Gen. xii. 2.

8. *Thy right hand*] The victorious strength of the Messiah is here described.

9. *Like a fiery oven, &c.*] Thou shalt consume them as in a furnace. See Mal. iv. 1. 'For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.' See also Deut. iv. 24.

10. *Their fruit . . . their seed*] Both words mean the same thing, namely, their children and descendants.

11. *Imagined such a device*] *Contrived such a plot.*

12. *The strings of thy bow, &c.*] Thou shalt direct against them the arrows of thy just anger.

Ps. XXII.—The Church of England, in selecting this as one of the Proper Psalms for Good Friday, concurs with the universal Christian Church in regarding it as a direct and most circumstantial prophecy of the crucifixion of Christ. How indeed can this application be doubted, when we find the Psalm quoted by the Divine Sufferer Himself, by the four Evangelists, and by St. Paul? Matt. xxvii. 35, 46 ; Mark xv. 24 ; Luke xxiii. 24 ; John xix. 24 ; Heb. ii. 12.

The latter verses, 26—32, refer to the fruit of the great sacrifice in the conversion of the world, that is, of many out of all countries,

2 O my God, I cry in the day-time, but Thou hearest not : and in the night-season also I take no rest.

3 And Thou continuest holy : O Thou worship of Israel.

4 Our fathers hoped in Thee : they trusted in Thee, and Thou didst deliver them.

5 They called upon Thee, and were holpen : they put their trust in Thee, and were not confounded.

6 But as for me, I am a worm, and no man : a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn : they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying,

8 'He trusted in God that He would deliver him : let Him deliver him, if He will have him.'

9 But Thou art He that took me out of my mother's womb : Thou wast my hope, when I hanged yet upon my mother's breasts.

10 I have been left unto Thee ever since I was born : Thou art my God even from my mother's womb.

11 O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand : and there is none to help me.

12 Many oxen are come about me : fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side.

13 They gape upon me with their mouths : as it were a ramping and a roaring lion.

without distinction of Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, to the faith and worship of the true God.

1. *My God, my God, &c.*] Words used by our Lord on the cross. The reader is referred to St. Matthew xxvii. and St. John xix. for the fulfilment of the minute prophecies contained in verses 7, 8, 15—18.

— *From my health*] "From helping me."

3. *And Thou continuest holy*] *Holy and just, whether our prayers*

be granted or refused. See Matt. xxvi. 39.

5. *Holpen*] The old form for *helped*.

10. *Left unto Thee*] Cast upon thy care and protection.

12. *Many oxen are come about me*] "Many bulls have compassed me," that is, Enemies strong and fierce as bulls. Bashan, a rich pasture country eastward of the Jordan, was famous for its large cattle.

13. *Ramping*] Springing up and bounding on his prey.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint : my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums : and Thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.

16 For many dogs are come about me : and the council of the wicked layeth siege against me.

17 They pierced my hands and my feet ; I may tell all my bones : they stand staring and looking upon me.

18 They part my garments among them : and cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But be not Thou far from me, O Lord : Thou art my succour, haste Thee to help me.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword : my darling from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth : Thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns.

22 I will declare thy Name unto my brethren : in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.

23 O praise the Lord, ye that fear Him : magnify

14. *Poured out*] The same figure is used at Deut. xxxii. 14; Joshua vii. 5. 'The hearts of the people melted, and became as water.'

15. *Potsherd*] The fragment of an earthenware vessel. *Sherd* is derived from 'shear.' The word 'shred' is still in common use. See Isa. xxx. 14.

15. *My tongue cleaveth to my gums*] Jesus said, 'I thirst.' John xix. 28.

— *Shalt bring*] "Hast brought."

16. *For many dogs*] Dogs in the East, not being domesticated, became wild and fierce. They were regarded by the Jews as unclean animals. Wicked and shameless men were called dogs. 2 Kings viii. 13; Phil. iii. 2.

— *The council of the wicked, &c.*] "The assembly of the wicked

have inclosed me."

17. *I may tell*] I can count, all my bones.

— *They stand*] The idle and curious multitude stand gazing at my sufferings.

20. *My darling*] That is, my *dearling*. 'Ling' is an affectionate diminutive. In this place *darling* is that which I hold most dear, namely, my life.

21. *The horns of the unicorns*] The fury and violence of wicked and bloodthirsty men. *The Unicorn* was probably a wild antelope of a large and powerful species, having a single horn on the forehead.

22. *I will declare thy Name*] Passing on from the sufferings and death of Christ, the Psalmist proceeds to foreshow their blessed consequences to all mankind.

Him, all ye of the seed of Jacob, and fear Him, all ye seed of Israel ;

24 For He hath not despised nor abhorred the low estate of the poor : He hath not hid his face from him, but when he called unto Him, He heard him.

25 My praise is of Thee in the great congregation : my vows will I perform in the sight of them that fear Him.

26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied : they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him : your heart shall live for ever.

27 All the ends of the world shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord : and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him.

28 For the kingdom is the Lord's : and He is the Governor among the people.

29 All such as be fat upon earth : have eaten, and worshipped.

30 All they that go down into the dust shall kneel before Him : and no man hath quickened his own soul.

31 My seed shall serve Him : they shall be counted unto the Lord for a generation.

32 They shall come, and the heavens shall declare his

26. *The poor shall eat and be satisfied*] When, on any occasion of thanksgiving for mercies received, an Israelite offered sacrifice, it was his custom to call together his poor neighbours to join in the feast. Deut. xvi. 11 ; Isa. xxv. 6. In the Bible Version, for *the poor*, we read "the meek," or poor in spirit, the objects of our Lord's especial blessing. See Matt. v. 5, 6 ; Luke vi. 21 ; see also John vi. 35, 51.

— *Your heart shall live for ever*] On the strength of this spiritual meat. 'If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.' John vi. 51.

27. *All the ends of the world*] The conversion of the Gentiles is here foretold.

27. *The kindreds*] The families.

29. *All such as be fat upon earth*] The rich, too, as well as the poor (v. 26), shall partake the spiritual feast, and worship Jehovah.

30. *All they that go down into the dust*] They who are bowed down to the dust of the earth with misery,—the dying,—and the dead, quickened, that is, raised to life by his power, not their own, shall bow the knee to King Messiah.

31. *My seed shall serve Him*] "A seed." Posterity shall serve Him ; they, the converted Gentiles, shall be counted as a generation to the Lord.

32. *They shall come*] Taking the Bible Version, the meaning seems

righteousness : unto a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made.

PSALM XXIII.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

THE Lord is my shepherd : therefore can I lack nothing.

2 He shall feed me in a green pasture : and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.

3 He shall convert my soul : and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his Name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for Thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

5 Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me : Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.

6 But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

to be this: The promised seed of true worshippers shall come, and shall declare to future generations of believers that God hath done all, that is, hath fulfilled his promises in Christ.

Ps. XXIII. is strikingly characteristic of its author David, who was himself a keeper of sheep, and knew by long habit and experience the watchfulness and tender care which a flock requires of its shepherd.

1. *The Lord is my shepherd*] 'I am the good shepherd.' John x. 11.

3. *He shall convert*] Rather, perhaps, revive and refresh my soul. The Bible Version has, "He restoreth my soul," meaning, He brings me back from wandering, and the present instead of the

future tense is used in describing God's mercies, vv. 2—5.

4. *Thy rod and thy staff*] The rod or sceptre to rule, and the staff to support and guide.

5. *Thou shalt prepare a table*] "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." The goodness and grace of God are here set forth under a figure in which He is represented as providing not merely sufficient food, but a rich feast, even before the eyes, and in spite of the opposition of, his enemies.

— *Thou hast anointed, &c.*] It was a custom at feasts to anoint the head of the honoured guest, and to fill up his cup to the brim. Gen. xliii. 34.

6. *But*] "Surely."

— *The house of the Lord*] The privilege which the pious Israelite

Morning.]

PSALM XXIV.

[Day 5.]

JEHOVAH THE KING OF EARTH AND HEAVEN.

Proper Psalm for Ascension Day.

THE earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is : the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For He hath founded it upon the seas : and prepared it upon the floods.

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord : or who shall rise up in his holy place ?

4 Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart : and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord : and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

6 This is the generation of them that seek Him : even of them that seek thy face, O Jacob.

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who is the King of glory : it is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up,

had of worshipping in God's Holy Sanctuary, is more abundantly theirs who are members of the Church of Christ, and abide in his house for ever. John viii. 35. See also 1 Tim. iii. 15 ; Heb. iii. 6.

Ps. XXIV. was probably written on the occasion of the removal of the ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the tabernacle on Mount Zion, B.C. 1042. 2 Sam. vi. 1. Its subject is the Procession of the Ark to Mount Zion, a type of Christ's Ascension into heaven. Verses 3, 4, should be compared with Isa. xxxiii. 15, 16.

4. *Vanity*] Here and in many other places, as for instance Psalms xii. 2 ; xli. 6 ; cxliv. 8, *Vanity* is put for whatever is false and deceitful.

5. *He shall receive, &c.*] Shall receive as a free gift, not win as a prize or reward.

— *Righteousness*] God's sentence that his cause is just.

6. *This is the generation*] Such is the character of God's true worshippers.

7—10.] These verses were doubtless sung responsively, as the ark was brought to the door of the tabernacle, and borne triumphantly in.

ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is the King of glory : even the Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

PSALM XXV.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION, GUIDANCE, AND PARDON.

UNTO Thee, O Lord, will I lift up my soul ; my God, I have put my trust in Thee : O let me not be confounded, neither let mine enemies triumph over me.

2 For all they that hope in Thee shall not be ashamed : but such as transgress without a cause shall be put to confusion.

3 Shew me thy ways, O Lord : and teach me thy paths.

4 Lead me forth in thy truth, and learn me : for Thou art the God of my salvation ; in Thee hath been my hope all the day long.

5 Call to remembrance, O Lord, thy tender mercies : and thy loving-kindnesses, which have been ever of old.

6 O remember not the sins and offences of my youth : but according to thy mercy think Thou upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness.

7 Gracious and righteous is the Lord : therefore will He teach sinners in the way.

8 Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment : and such as are gentle, them shall He learn his way.

Ps. XXV. is a prayer for help and spiritual guidance by one whose trust in God had been confirmed by the remembrance of his past mercies. It sets forth some of the chief qualities or dispositions which draw down God's blessing and favour, and, as a prayer, may be fitly used by Christians of all times.

2. *Such as transgress without a cause*] Those who deal treacherously without provocation.

7. *Will He teach sinners in the way*] Rather, will show the sinners the way.

8. *Shall He guide in judgment, &c.*] He will lead the humble to a knowledge of his will and laws.

9 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth : unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies.

10 For thy Name's sake, O Lord : be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

11 What man is he, that feareth the Lord : him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose.

12 His soul shall dwell at ease : and his seed shall inherit the land.

13 The secret of the Lord is among them that fear Him : and He will shew them his covenant.

14 Mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord : for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.

15 Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy upon me : for I am desolate, and in misery.

16 The sorrows of my heart are enlarged : O bring Thou me out of my troubles.

17 Look upon my adversity and misery : and forgive me all my sin.

18 Consider mine enemies, how many they are : and they bear a tyrannous hate against me.

19 O keep my soul, and deliver me : let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee.

10. *For thy Name's sake,*] For the honour of thy Name, and that thy character for mercy and pardon may be gloriously made known. The same expression occurs at Ps. xxxi. 4; liv. 1.

11. *Him shall He teach*] Him shall He guide into the chosen path.

— *The way that He shall choose*] That is, the right way. It would be more clearly rendered, The way that he *should* choose.

12. *His soul shall dwell at ease*] 'His soul' is the same as He Himself, and the sense, therefore, is, He shall enjoy a happy life, and his posterity shall continue in quiet possession of the land.

13. *The secret of the Lord, &c.*] The knowledge of God, and of his salvation, perhaps his covenant of eternal life through Christ, for 'this is life eternal, that they might *know Thee*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' Consider also our Lord's words to his disciples; 'All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.' John xv. 15. See also Prov. iii. 32.

14. *The net*] The snare which has been laid for me.

17. *Forgive me all my sin*] In this verse the forgiveness of sin is regarded as including the removal of trouble and sorrow. Compare Matt. ix. 5, 6.

20 Let perfectness and righteous dealing wait upon me : for my hope hath been in Thee.

21 Deliver Israel, O God : out of all his troubles.

PSALM XXVI.

THE PLEA OF CONSCIOUS INTEGRITY.

BE Thou my judge, O Lord, for I have walked innocently : my trust hath been also in the Lord, therefore shall I not fall.

2 Examine me, O Lord, and prove me : try out my reins and my heart.

3 For thy loving-kindness is ever before mine eyes : and I will walk in thy truth.

4 I have not dwelt with vain persons : neither will I have fellowship with the deceitful.

5 I have hated the congregation of the wicked : and will not sit among the ungodly.

6 I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord : and so will I go to thine altar ;

20. *Let perfectness and righteous dealing wait upon me*] "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on Thee."

21. *Deliver Israel, O God, &c.*] It should be noted that David prays for his Church and country, (for the name Israel includes both,) as well as for himself.

Ps. XXVI.—David pleads his past faithfulness, and his steadfast purpose to adhere to God's worship and service, as grounds for his hope and trust that God would not confound him with the wicked and deceitful persons from whom he had carefully separated himself in his daily walk.

1. *Innocently*] In simplicity and integrity of heart.

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3. *I will walk*] Rather, "I have walked."

4. *Vain persons*] The false, and such as cannot be trusted.

5. *Will not sit among, &c.*] The plea of God's servant, in this and the preceding verse, reminds us of the conduct and habits of the man that is pronounced "Blessed" in Ps. i. 1.

6. *I will wash my hands, &c.*] Mine shall be the real cleansing of the heart and spirit. The allusion is to the law which required the Priest to wash his hands before entering the sanctuary or approaching the altar, Exod. xxx. 18—21; xl. 20; Deut. xxi. 6. Washing the hands was an action expressive of innocence. See Matt. xxvii. 24. The phrase has passed into our own language.

7 That I may shew the voice of thanksgiving : and tell of all thy wondrous works.

8 Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house : and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

9 O shut not up my soul with the sinners : nor my life with the blood-thirsty ;

10 In whose hands is wickedness : and their right hand is full of gifts.

11 But as for me, I will walk innocently : O deliver me, and be merciful unto me.

12 My foot standeth right : I will praise the Lord in the congregations.

Evening.]

PSALM XXVII.

[*Day 5.*

TRUST IN GOD IN THE MIDST OF DANGERS.

THE Lord is my light, and my salvation ; whom then shall I fear : the Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom then shall I be afraid ?

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies, and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh : they stumbled and fell.

3 Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid : and though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in Him.

7. *That I may shew the voice*] May make the voice of thanksgiving to be heard.

9. *O shut not up my soul, &c.*] "Gather not my soul with sinners." David prays that he may not be numbered or classed with sinners. See Gen. xviii. 23.

10. *Gifts*] That is, "bribes" to corrupt the judge, or to procure false witness.

12. *My foot standeth right*] I stand in a straight path on level and safe ground. Being preserved from great peril, I am on my way to bless God in his sanctuary for his

providential care and protection of me.

Ps. XXVII. furnishes an instance of confidence in the protection of the Almighty, which his servants are enabled to maintain in the midst of the greatest dangers. Trust in God's promises, and a patient waiting upon Him, are the best safeguards against despair, and the only true source of comfort.

2. *To eat up my flesh*] To devour me, as wild beasts eat up their prey.

3. *Though an host of men*]

4 One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require : even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of life, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit his temple.

5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in his tabernacle : yea, in the secret place of his dwelling shall He hide me, and set me up upon a rock of stone.

6 And now shall He lift up mine head : above mine enemies round about me.

7 Therefore will I offer in his dwelling an oblation with great gladness : I will sing, and speak praises unto the Lord.

8 Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto Thee : have mercy upon me, and hear me.

9 My heart hath talked of Thee, Seek ye my face : Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

10 O hide not Thou thy face from me : nor cast thy servant away in displeasure.

11 Thou hast been my succour : leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

12 When my father and my mother forsake me : the Lord taketh me up.

13 Teach me thy way, O Lord : and lead me in the right way, because of mine enemies.

14 Deliver me not over into the will of mine adversaries : for there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as speak wrong.

15 I should utterly have fainted : but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Though a whole army should encamp against me.

4. *Which I will require*] Or, That thing I earnestly seek. Luke x. 42.

— *To behold the fair beauty of the Lord, &c.*] To meditate on the divine grace and goodness of Jehovah in his holy sanctuary. See 2 Cor. iii. 18.

9. *My heart hath talked of*

Thee] “When Thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” Ps. xxiv. 6.

12. *When my father, &c.*] Father and mother, dearest friends and closest kinsfolk, have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up.

15. *In the land of the living*] Here, in this life. Jer. xi. 19.

16 O tarry thou the Lord's leisure : be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart ; and put thou thy trust in the Lord.

PSALM XXVIII.

PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING FOR DELIVERANCE.

UNTO Thee will I cry, O Lord my strength : think no scorn of me ; lest, if Thou make as though Thou hearest not, I become like them that go down into the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my humble petitions, when I cry unto Thee : when I hold up my hands towards the mercy-seat of thy holy temple.

3 O pluck me not away, neither destroy me with the ungodly and wicked doers : which speak friendly to their neighbours, but imagine mischief in their hearts.

4 Reward them according to their deeds : and according to the wickedness of their own inventions.

5 Recompense them after the work of their hands : pay them that they have deserved.

6 For they regard not in their mind the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands : therefore shall He break them down, and not build them up.

7 Praised be the Lord : for He hath heard the voice of my humble petitions.

16. *O tarry Thou, &c.*] "Wait on the Lord." Wait his time in faith and patience. Isa. xxv. 9; Heb. x. 36.

Ps. XXVIII.—David here, 1—6, records his anxious prayer while in danger and distress; and 7—10, his praises and thanksgivings for safety.

1. *Think no scorn of me*] Turn not from me in contempt, despise not my humble supplication.

— *If Thou make, &c.*] If Thou

be silent, or refuse to answer me.

2. *Towards the mercy-seat, &c.*] See 1 Kings viii. 30—49.

4. *Reward them according to their deeds*] With a holy jealousy for the honour of Almighty God, David prays that He will display his power in the overthrow of the wicked.

6. *They regard not, &c.*] The same careless and worldly spirit is rebuked in almost the same words, Isa. v. 12.

8 The Lord is my strength, and my shield ; my heart hath trusted in Him, and I am helped : therefore my heart danceth for joy, and ~~is~~ my song will I praise Him.

9 The Lord is my strength ; and He is the whole-some defence of his Anointed.

10 O save thy people, and give thy blessing unto thine inheritance : feed them, and set them up for ever.

PSALM XXIX.

THE VOICE OF THE LORD.

BRING unto the Lord, O ye mighty, bring young rams unto the Lord : ascribe unto the Lord worship and strength.

2 Give the Lord the honour due unto his Name : worship the Lord with holy worship.

3 It is the Lord, that commandeth the waters : it is the glorious God, that maketh the thunder.

4 It is the Lord, that ruleth the sea ; the voice of the Lord is mighty in operation : the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.

5 The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedar-trees : yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Libanus.

9. *The wholesome defence*] "Saving" defence, the defence which guards from injury, and keeps whole. Refer to Ps. xx. 6.

10. *Feed them, and set them up*] Be their Shepherd, and uphold them.

Ps. XXIX. would appear to have been written by David on occasion of some memorable thunder-storm, which was felt throughout the land from Mount Lebanon in the north to Kadesh in the south. It may well serve to humble even the mightiest amongst men, by the contemplation of the effects of Je-

hovah's irresistible power. Refer to 1 Sam. xii. 16—19.

1. *O ye mighty*] The Princes and mighty men of the earth are called to offer sacrifice to Jehovah in acknowledgment of his sovereign power.

— *Bring young rams unto the Lord*] Rams to be offered on the altar of the Lord. This clause is not found in the Bible Version. Verses 1, 2, are almost the same as 1 Chron. xvi. 28, 29.

4. *Mighty in operation*] Powerful in its effects, as when the thunderstorm rends the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf : Libanus also, and Sirion, like a young unicorn.

7 The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire ; the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness : yea, the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Cades.

8 The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to bring forth young, and discovereth the thick bushes : in his temple doth every man speak of his honour.

9 The Lord sitteth above the water-flood : and the Lord remaineth a King for ever.

10 The Lord shall give strength unto his people : the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Morning.]

PSALM XXX.

[*Day 6.*

PRESERVATION FROM DANGER OR SICKNESS.

I WILL magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast set me up : and not made my foes to triumph over me.

2 O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee : and Thou hast healed me.

3 Thou, Lord, hast brought my soul out of hell :

6. *To skip*] To bound. The forest trees in a storm sway to and fro, and seem as they bend and rise to resemble the gambols of young animals.

— *Sirion*] Another name for Hermon, one of the summits of Mount Lebanon. Deut. iii. 8, 9.

7. *Divideth the flames of fire*] Cleaves asunder with strokes of forked lightning.

— *The wilderness of Cades*] Or *Kadesh*, part of the wilderness through which the Israelites passed. Numb. xiii. 26.

8. *Maketh the hinds to bring forth young*] The peals of thunder so terrify them, that they cast their young before the time.

— *Discovereth the thick bushes*] Uncovers, that is, strips, and lays bare the trees of the forest.

— *Speak of his honour*] Or, cry "Glory."

Ps. XXX. was probably composed to celebrate some signal deliverance —perhaps the cessation of the pestilence which God had sent to rebuke the pride and presumption of David in numbering the people. The Psalmist calls upon all God's servants to join in his praise, for soon relenting, and turning his wrath into forgiveness and mercy. The title of the Psalm in the Bib. Ver. is "A Psalm at the Dedication of the House of David," and the occasion may have been the dedication of the piece of ground which he had bought near the place where the plague had been stayed, as the site of the future Temple; and the erection of an altar thereon. See 1 Chron. xxi. 26; xxii. 1—5.

3. *Hast brought my soul out of hell*] Hast rescued me from the jaws of death: hast kept my life.

Thou hast kept my life from them that go down to the pit.

4 Sing praises unto the Lord, O ye saints of his : and give thanks unto Him for a remembrance of his holiness.

5 For his wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye, and in his pleasure is life : heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

6 And in my prosperity I said, 'I shall never be removed : Thou, Lord, of thy goodness hast made my hill so strong.'

7 Thou didst turn thy face from me : and I was troubled.

8 Then cried I unto Thee, O Lord : and gat me to my Lord right humbly.

9 'What profit is there in my blood : when I go down to the pit ?

10 'Shall the dust give thanks unto Thee : or shall it declare thy truth ?

11 'Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me : Lord, be Thou my helper.'

12 Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy : Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

or kept me alive from among those who go down to the grave.

5. *In his pleasure*] Through his favour.

6. *And in my prosperity I said*] Even good men are tempted by prosperity to rest satisfied with the comforts of this life, and require the trial of adversity to loosen their affections from things temporal.

9. *What profit is there in my blood, &c.*] What advantage wilt Thou derive from shedding my blood? What service can I render to Thee in the grave? Ps. vi. 5; Isa. xxxviii. 18.

10. *Shall the dust, &c.*] Better,

"shall dust;" shall man, when he is returned to the dust from which he was formed, give thanks unto Thee?

12. *My sackcloth*] Sackcloth was a coarse black cloth, commonly made of hair, Rev. vi. 12. It was used for mourning instead of the ordinary dress, and was either girt round the loins or spread as a mat under the mourner. Gen. xxxvii. 34. Sackcloth was also worn by penitents to express sorrow for their sins, 1 Kings xxi. 27; Isa. lviii. 5; and a like rough garment was assumed by prophets, 2 Kings i. 8; Zech. xiii. 4; Matt. iii. 8.

13 Therefore shall every good man sing of thy praise without ceasing : O my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever.

PSALM XXXI.

PRAYER OF FAITH IN THE MIDST OF ADVERSITY.

IN Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust : let me never be put to confusion, deliver me in thy righteousness.

2 Bow down thine ear to me : make haste to deliver me.

3 And be Thou my strong rock, and house of defence : that Thou mayest save me.

4 For Thou art my strong rock, and my castle : be Thou also my guide, and lead me for thy Name's sake.

5 Draw me out of the net that they have laid privily for me : for Thou art my strength.

6 Into thy hands I commend my spirit : for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, Thou God of truth.

7 I have hated them that hold of superstitious vanities : and my trust hath been in the Lord.

8 I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy : for Thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my soul in adversities.

13. *Therefore shall every good man, &c.*] The Bible Version is more exact—"To the end that my glory [or my soul] may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent." As the Psalmist, verses 9—11, had prayed against death as depriving him of the power of serving the Lord, so in this he mentions his deliverance as a ground for returning thanks and praise to God.

Ps. XXXI. records David's prayers and vows, in danger and distress; his grateful acknowledgment of the Divine mercy; and his call upon all men to trust in God's goodness and truth, of which he was himself a signal example.

1. *In thy righteousness*] The Psalmist appeals to the justice of God, who would never allow his faithful servant to be given over into the hands of his enemies.

6. *Into thy hands I commend my spirit*] These words were adopted by our Saviour on the cross (Luke xxiii. 46); and words to the like effect were used by St. Stephen as he fell asleep. Acts vii. 59.

7. *That hold of superstitious vanities*] That look to, or trust in idols and false gods; that is, gods which have no real existence. See Jonah ii. 8. *Superstitious belief*, is a belief of something over and above (quod superstat) the truth.

8. *Hast known my soul in adver-*

9 Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy : but hast set my feet in a large room.

10 Have mercy upon me, O Lord ; for I am in trouble : and mine eye is consumed for very heaviness ; yea, my soul and my body.

11 For my life is waxen old with heaviness : and my years with mourning.

12 My strength faileth me because of mine iniquity : and my bones are consumed.

13 I became a reproof among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours : and they of mine acquaintance were afraid of me ; and they that did see me without conveyed themselves from me.

14 I am clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind ; I am become like a broken vessel.

15 For I have heard the blasphemy of the multitude : and fear is on every side, while they conspire together against me, and take their counsel to take away my life.

16 But my hope hath been in Thee, O Lord : I have said, 'Thou art my God.'

17 My time is in thy hand ; deliver me from the hand of mine enemies : and from them that persecute me.

sities] Hast owned and comforted me when I was in straits and trouble.

9. *Thou hast not shut me up, &c.*] Thou hast not given me over into the power of the enemy, but hast set my feet in an open plain ; in other words, Thou hast released me from bondage, and set me at liberty. Pa. xviii. 19 ; cxviii. 5.

12. *Because of mine iniquity*] David humbly acknowledges his bodily sickness to be a chastisement of his sins.

13. *I became a reproof, &c.*] An object of reproach. This and the two following verses apply more

closely still to Christ the Son of David. See Isa. liii. 3 ; Matt. xxvii. 1.

13. *They that did see me without, &c.*] Or, they who saw me in the street fled from me.

14. *Like a broken vessel*] Useless, and fit only to be cast away. So Jer. xxii. 28.

15. *The blasphemy*] Rather, the slander. We find this verse almost exactly repeated in Jer. xx. 20.

17. *My time is in thy hand*] My times, i.e. of prosperity or adversity, of life or death, are in thy power.

18 Shew thy servant the light of thy countenance : and save me for thy mercy's sake.

19 Let me not be confounded, O Lord, for I have called upon Thee : let the ungodly be put to confusion, and be put to silence in the grave.

20 Let the lying lips be put to silence : which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully speak against the righteous.

21 O how plentiful is thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee : and that Thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in Thee, even before the sons of men !

22 Thou shalt hide them privily by thine own presence from the provoking of all men : Thou shalt keep them secretly in thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues.

23 Thanks be to the Lord : for he hath shewed me marvellous great kindness in a strong city.

24 And when I made haste, I said : 'I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes.'

25 Nevertheless, Thou heardest the voice of my prayer : when I cried unto Thee.

26 O love the Lord, all ye his saints : for the Lord preserveth them that are faithful, and plenteously rewardeth the proud doer.

27 Be strong, and He shall establish your heart : all ye that put your trust in the Lord.

22. *Thou shalt hide them, &c.*] Thy favour and the 'light of thy countenance' shall be their shelter and refuge from the plots and devices of ungodly men. Compare Ps. xxvii. 5.

— *The provoking*] More exactly, the conspirings. He whose 'life is hid with Christ in God,' (Col. iii. 3,) will little heed the slanders and gainsayings of worldly men.

23. *Marvellous great kindness in a strong city*] Making him safe as in a fortified city.

24. *And when I made haste*] In the hurry of alarm and danger.

26. *Plenteously rewardeth, &c.*] Requites, or repays to the full. To reward is used in Scripture in the sense of paying back evil as well as good. See Ps. xxviii. 4; Isa. iii. 11.

Evening.]

PSALM XXXII.

[Day 6.]

THE BLESSEDNESS OF HAVING OUR SINS FORGIVEN.

Proper Psalm for Ash Wednesday.

BLESSED is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven ;
and whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth
no sin : and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 For while I held my tongue : my bones consumed
away through my daily complaining.

4 For thy hand is heavy upon me day and night ;
and my moisture is like the drought in summer.

5 I will acknowledge my sin unto Thee : and mine
unrighteousness have I not hid.

6 I said, 'I will confess my sins unto the Lord' :
and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.

7 For this shall every one that is godly make his
prayer unto Thee, in a time when Thou mayest be
found : but in the great water-floods they shall not
come nigh him.

Ps. XXXII.—The second of the Penitential Psalms is commonly supposed to have been written by David on obtaining forgiveness from God after his grievous sins in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah. 2 Sam. xii. 13. It seems to be the language of one who has actually felt the intolerable burden of sin—the instant relief occasioned by confession—and the comfort of pardon.

1. *Blessed is he, &c.*] The first two verses are quoted by St. Paul, Rom. iv. 7, 8, as shewing the blessedness of those whom God of his free grace pardons, and accounts righteous.

2. *Imputeth no sin*] Against whom He lays no charge of sin.

3. *For while I held my tongue*] That is, so long as I held back from openly confessing my sins to God.

3. *Through my daily complaining*] "Through my roaring (or groaning) all the day long."

4. *Thy hand is heavy, &c.*] Better, thy hand *was* heavy upon me.

—*My moisture is like the drought in summer*] "My moisture is turned into the drought of summer," my vital moisture is dried up.

5. *I will acknowledge*] The past tense should still be retained as in Bib. Ver. "I acknowledged."

6. *So Thou forgavest, &c.*] For an example of God's forgiveness of sin, immediately on confession, see 2 Sam. xii. 13; see also 1 John i. 9.

7. *For this, &c.*] Since pardon follows repentance and confession, let every devout man be careful to offer his prayer unto Thee in an acceptable time. Isa. lv. 6.

—*In the great water-floods, &c.*] "In the floods of great waters (in

8 Thou art a place to hide me in, Thou shalt preserve me from trouble : Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

9 'I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go : and I will guide thee with mine eye.

10 'Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding : whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, lest they fall upon thee.'

11 Great plagues remain for the ungodly : but whose putteth his trust in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every side.

12 Be glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord : and be joyful, all ye that are true of heart.

PSALM XXXIII.

GOD'S JUSTICE, POWER, WISDOM, AND GOODNESS.

REJOICE in the Lord, O ye righteous : for it becometh well the just to be thankful.

2 Praise the Lord with harp : sing praises unto Him with the lute, and instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing unto the Lord a new song : sing praises lustily unto Him with a good courage.

4 For the word of the Lord is true : and all his works are faithful.

5 He loveth righteousness and judgment : the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

the storms of trouble and adversity] they shall not come nigh unto him."

9. *I will inform thee*] David offers to all men the benefit of the wise counsels and precepts which he had been taught of God. Compare Isa. xxx. 21.

10. *Whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, &c.*] Rather, who are so wild that unless restrained and ruled with bridle and curb, they will not come nigh, or obey, their owners. James iii. 3. The meaning is, yield a ready

and cheerful obedience to God's law, and do not, like the obstinate mule, stand aloof till you are constrained by superior force.

Ps. XXXIII.—In this Psalm are celebrated the power and goodness of God, as displayed in Creation and Providence.

1. *The just*] The upright, the true servants of God.

3. *Lustily*] Heartily, with the whole soul; or, it may be, play skilfully with shouts of joy.

6 By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made : and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together, as it were upon an heap : and layeth up the deep as in a treasure-house.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord : stand in awe of Him, all ye that dwell in the world.

9 For He spake, and it was done : He commanded, and it stood fast.

10 The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought : and maketh the devices of the people to be of none effect, and casteth out the counsels of princes.

11 The counsel of the Lord shall endure for ever : and the thoughts of his heart from generation to generation.

12 Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord Jehovah : and blessed are the folk that He hath chosen to Him to be his inheritance.

13 The Lord looked down from heaven, and beheld all the children of men : from the habitation of his dwelling He considereth all them that dwell on the earth.

14 He fashioneth all the hearts of them : and understandeth all their works.

15 There is no king that can be saved by the multitude of an host : neither is any mighty man delivered by much strength.

16 A horse is counted but a vain thing to save a

6. *By the Word of the Lord, &c.*] Refer to John i. 3; Heb. xi. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 5.

— *The breath of his mouth*] His Spirit.

7. *He gathereth the waters, &c.*] Compare Exod. xv. 8; Job xxxviii. 8.

9. *It was done*] More correctly, as well as more emphatically, *IT WAS*. Compare Gen. i. 3.

13. *From the habitation of his dwelling*] “From the place of his

habitation.” So in the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple we have, ‘Hear Thou from heaven thy dwelling-place.’

14. *He fashioneth all the hearts, &c.*] God, who formed the hearts of men, must surely know their inmost springs and movements. See Ps. cxxxix. 4.

16. *A horse is counted but a vain thing*] Vain is reliance upon the horse for safety. See Prov. xxi. 31; Amos ii. 15.

man : neither shall He deliver any man by his great strength.

17 Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him : and upon them that put their trust in his mercy ;

18 To deliver their soul from death : and to feed them in the time of dearth.

19 Our soul hath patiently tarried for the Lord : for He is our help, and our shield.

20 For our heart shall rejoice in Him : because we have hoped in his holy Name.

21 Let thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon us : like as we do put our trust in Thee.

PSALM XXXIV.

INVITATION TO UNITED PRAISE.—LESSONS OF HOLY LIVING.

I WILL alway give thanks unto the Lord : his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord : the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

3 O praise the Lord with me : and let us magnify his Name together.

4 I sought the Lord, and He heard me : yea, He delivered me out of all my fear.

5 They had an eye unto Him, and were lightened : and their faces were not ashamed.

Ps. XXXIV., as we learn from the title prefixed to it in the Bible, was composed by David on the occasion of his feigning himself mad in the presence of Achish, king of Gath. 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15. In this way he contrived to save his life, and he here praises God for his deliverance. He praises Him also for his merciful care and protection of all who trust in Him, and then proceeds to teach us that the fear of the Lord is best shown in keep-

ing his commandments.

2. *Shall hear thereof, and be glad*] Shall hear of God's mercy to me, and be comforted.

5. *They had an eye unto Him, &c.*] The humble servants of God mentioned in ver. 2, looked up to God for deliverance, and received a gracious answer to their prayer ; just as the Israelites, the mortally wounded, looked up to the brazen serpent in the wilderness and lived. Numb. xxi. 8, 9.

6 Lo, the poor crieth, and the Lord heareth him : yea, and saveth him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear Him : and delivereth them.

8 O taste, and see, how gracious the Lord is : blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

9 O fear the Lord, ye that are His saints : for they that fear Him lack nothing.

10 The lions do lack and suffer hunger : but they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.

: 11 Come, ye children, and hearken unto me : I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

12 What man is he that lusteth to live : and would fain see good days ?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil : and thy lips that they speak no guile.

14 Eschew evil, and do good : seek peace, and ensue it.

15 The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous : and his ears are open unto their prayers.

16 The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil : to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them : and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

7. *The angel of the Lord tarrieth, &c.*] "Encampeth round about them that fear Him." Gen. xxxii. 1, 2; Exod. xiv. 19; 2 Kings vi. 17; Zech. ix. 8; Heb. i. 14. According to the meaning of the word, an angel is a messenger sent from God. Our Lord Himself is called an 'angel,' Exod. iii. 2, 4; and in Mal. iii. 1, the messenger (or angel) of the covenant.

11. *Come, ye children*] David here adopts the style of an Israelitish teacher or elder addressing

his youthful scholars. Compare Prov. i. 8; iv. 1.

12. *Lusteth to live, and would fain see good days*] Desires to live a long and happy life. *Fain* in old English means glad, but is here used adverbially, and means, willingly, gladly.

12—15. These verses are quoted by St. Peter in his first Epistle, iii. 10—12.

14. *Eschew evil, &c.*] "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." 1 Pet. iii. 11.

18 The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart : and will save such as be of an humble spirit.

19 Great are the troubles of the righteous : but the Lord delivereth him out of all.

20 He keepeth all his bones : so that not one of them is broken.

21 But misfortune shall slay the ungodly : and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

22 The Lord delivereth the souls of his servants : and all they that put their trust in Him shall not be destitute.

Morning.]

PSALM XXXV.

[*Day 7.*

APPEAL TO GOD'S JUSTICE AGAINST EVIL MEN.

PLEAD Thou my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me : and fight Thou against them that fight against me.

2 Lay hand upon the shield and buckler : and stand up to help me.

18. *The Lord is nigh, &c.*] 'Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.' *Contrite* is, crushed and humbled under a sense of sin. Isa. lvii. 15; see also lvi. 2.

19. *Great are the troubles*] 'In the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.' John xvi. 33.

20. *He keepeth all his bones*] A proverbial expression to represent God's providential care of his people. Similar in effect is our Lord's assurance, Matt. x. 30, 'The very hairs of your head are all numbered.' The thoughts of the Christian reader will turn to his Saviour on the Cross. See John xix. 36.

21. *Shall be desolate*] More cor-

rectly, shall be condemned.

22. *Shall not be destitute*] Shall not be condemned. The word translated 'destitute' here is the same as that rendered 'desolate' in the preceding verse.

Ps. XXXV. may probably have been composed on the occasion of David's encounter with Saul in the cave of Engedi, when David refused to take the king's life. 1 Sam. xxiv. His reference of the matters between them to God,—'The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thy hand,' verse 15, bears a close resemblance to the first verse of this Psalm.

1. *Plead Thou my cause, &c.*] Take up my case and defend me against my enemies. Isa. xlix. 25.

2. *Lay hand upon the shield, &c.*] God is invoked in language such as

3 Bring forth the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me : say unto my soul, 'I am thy salvation.'

4 Let them be confounded, and put to shame, that seek after my soul : let them be turned back, and brought to confusion, that imagine mischief for me.

5 Let them be as the dust before the wind : and the angel of the Lord scattering them.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery : and let the angel of the Lord persecute them.

7 For they have privily laid their net to destroy me without a cause : yea, even without a cause have they made a pit for my soul.

8 Let a sudden destruction come upon him unawares, and his net that he hath laid privily, catch himself : that he may fall into his own mischief.

9 And, my soul, be joyful in the Lord : it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones shall say, 'Lord, who is like unto Thee, who deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him : yea, the poor, and him that is in misery, from him that spoileth him ?'

11 False witnesses did rise up : they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

might be addressed to an earthly champion.

3. *Them that persecute me*] My pursuers.

— *Thy salvation*] Thy Protector and Saviour. 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Rom. viii. 31.

4. *Seek after my soul*] Plot against my life.

— *Imagine mischief*] That is, plot or contrive mischief. By the law of England it is high treason to 'imagine the death of the King.' The word occurs several times in the Psalms. See x. 2; xxi. 11; xxviii. 3; xxxvi. 4, &c.

5. *As the dust*] Rather, "as chaff."

6. *Persecute*] Pursue or chase

them.

7. *Privily laid their net*] To entrap and catch wild beasts, pits were dug, and over them were thrown nets, which were then covered with branches and earth.

— *Without a cause*] Without any fault or offence on my part. Refer to Ps. vii. 16; ix. 16.

9. *In his salvation*] In the protection and safety which He affords.

10. *All my bones shall say*] All my members—my whole body.

— *Spoileth*] Oppresseth, and plundereth.

11—13. *False witnesses did rise up*] Verses prophetically descriptive of our Lord before Pilate, of the conduct of his accusers, and of

12 They rewarded me evil for good : to the great discomfort of my soul.

13 Nevertheless, when they were sick, I put on sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting : and my prayer shall turn into mine own bosom.

14 I behaved myself as though it had been my friend, or my brother : I went heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.

15 But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together : yea, the very abjects came together against me unawares, making mouths at me; and ceased not.

16 With the flatterers were busy mockers : who gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long wilt Thou look upon this : O deliver my soul from the calamities which they bring on me, and my darling from the lions.

18 So will I give Thee thanks in the great congregation : I will praise Thee among much people.

19 O let not them that are mine enemies triumph over me ungodly : neither let them wink with their eyes that hate me without a cause.

his pardoning prayer for his murderers. Matt. xxvi. 59.

12. *To the great discomfort, &c.*] So as to make my life forlorn and desolate. The condition expressed is that of bereavement.

13. *Into mine own bosom*] My prayer, even though unavailing for them, shall bring back a blessing to myself. The expression occurs Ps. lxxix. 12; Isa. lrv. 6; Luke vi. 38.

15. *The very abjects*] The lowest of the people. Thus, too, the soldiers and the common rabble reviled and mocked our Lord upon the cross. Matt. xxvii. 27—31.

16. *With the flatterers were busy mockers*] Base courtiers and table jesters, who paid for the feasts to

which they were admitted, by their scurrilous wit. Refer to Ephes. v. 4.

17. *How long wilt Thou look upon this*] Rather, How long wilt Thou look on?

— *My darling*] My only, my treasured one; meaning my life. Refer to Ps. xxii. 22, and note.

— *From the lions*] That is, of course, from enemies as fierce and ravenous as lions.

19. *Triumph over me ungodly*] “Wrongfully rejoice over me.”

— *Wink with their eyes*] Wink at each other in derision, and so mock and make sport at my fall.

— *That hate me without a cause*] Our Lord, speaking of the persecutions which He suffered from his enemies, declares them to be the

20 And why? their communing is not for peace : but they imagine deceitful words against them that are quiet in the land.

21 They gaped upon me with their mouths, and said : 'Fie on thee, fie on thee, we saw it with our eyes.'

22 This Thou hast seen, O Lord : hold not thy tongue then ; go not far from me, O Lord.

23 Awake, and stand up to judge my quarrel : avenge Thou my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness : and let them not triumph over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, 'There, there, so would we have it' : neither let them say, 'We have devoured him.'

26 Let them be put to confusion and shame together, that rejoice at my trouble : let them be clothed with rebuke and dishonour, that boast themselves against me.

27 Let them be glad and rejoice, that favour my righteous dealing : yea, let them say alway, 'Blessed be the Lord, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.'

28 And as for my tongue, it shall be talking of thy righteousness : and of thy praise all the day long.

PSALM XXXVI.

MAN'S WICKEDNESS.—GOD'S GOODNESS.

MY heart sheweth me the wickedness of the ungodly : that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

fulfilment of prophecy : 'That the word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, They hated me without a cause.' John xv. 25.

20. *Their communing, &c.*] Their talk together—the counsel which they take with one another—is not for peace, *but they imagine deceitful words*, that is, They invent treacherous devices, &c.

25. *Let them not say, &c.*] Let not my enemies be able to say, 'We have had our way ; we have

destroyed him.'

26. *Let them be put to confusion*] This and other similar passages, if they are to be regarded as prayers and not prophecies, are in effect prayers that the malicious enemies of God's law and the persecutors of his servants may be foiled and put to shame.

Ps. XXXVI. presents to us two strongly contrasted pictures : 1, The wickedness and deceitfulness of the ungodly ; 2, The eternal faithful-

2 For he flattereth himself in his own sight : until his abominable sin be found out.

3 The words of his mouth are unrighteous, and full of deceit : he hath left off to behave himself wisely, and to do good.

4 He imagineth mischief upon his bed, and hath set himself in no good way : neither doth he abhor any thing that is evil.

5 Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens : and thy faithfulness unto the clouds.

6 Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains : thy judgments are like the great deep.

7 Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast ; How excellent is thy mercy, O God : and the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

8 They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house : and Thou shalt give them drink of thy pleasures, as out of the river.

ness, mercy, and loving-kindness of God.

1. *My heart sheweth*] The wickedness of the ungodly man makes me feel in my heart that he is living without the fear of God.

2. *For he flattereth himself, &c.*] That is, he deludes himself with the hope that God will not find out his sin.

4. *Upon his bed*] So far gone is he in wickedness, that even in the solitude and silence of his night hours, instead of mourning over his past sins, he is still plotting further mischief.

— *In no good way*] “In a way that is not good.”

5. *Thy mercy, O Lord*] Notwithstanding the evil devices and corrupt practices of the wicked, a merciful and all-powerful God rules over all.

6. *Like the strong mountains*] The righteousness or justice of God

is as conspicuous on all sides, and as immovably fixed as the mountains. His judgments—the laws and decrees of his providence—are as unfathomable and unlimited as the ocean.

7. *Thou, Lord, shalt save*] “Thou preservest man and beast.” God sustains in life and provides for the wants of all his creatures. Ps. civ. 14.

8. *The plenteousness of thy house*] Meaning first, perhaps, the abundance of good things which God has provided for his people ; and secondly, the rich blessings of his Sanctuary or Church.

— *Drink of thy pleasures*] “Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.” See Ps. xlii. 4, Bib. Ver. “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.” See also Zech. xiv. 8, and Rev. xxii. 1.

9 For with Thee is the well of life ; and in thy light shall we see light.

10 O continue forth thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee : and thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart.

11 O let not the foot of pride come against me : and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down.

12 There are they fallen, all that work wickedness : they are cast down, and shall not be able to stand.

Evening.]

PSALM XXXVII.

[*Day 7.*

THE DIFFERENT ENDS OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED.

FRET not thyself because of the ungodly : neither be thou envious against the evil doers.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass : and be withered even as the green herb.

3 Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good : dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

9. *The well of life*] “The fountain of life.” “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John iv. 14.

— *In thy light, &c.*] “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” John i. 9. God, like the sun, can only be seen by the light which proceeds from Himself. In Ps. iv. 7, David prays, ‘Lord, lift Thou up the light of thy countenance upon us;’ and to see and to walk in that light is to share the happiness, peace, and salvation which proceed from God only. See Ps. xxxvii. 1.

10. *Them that know Thee*] Those who acknowledge Thee to be their God, and keep thy commandments.

11. *The foot of pride, &c.*] Let neither the *foot* of the proud nor the *hand* of the ungodly prevail against me.

12. *There are they fallen*] While

the ungodly are in prosperity the world applauds them; but the Psalmist from the watch-tower of faith describes from afar their destruction, and speaks of it with as much confidence as if it had already happened.

Ps. XXXVII.—David towards the close of an eventful and chequered life sums up in this Psalm the results of his long experience. The wicked may prosper for a time, and the godly may be afflicted and depressed; but in the end those who trust in the Lord will be rewarded, and they who set Him at nought will be brought into judgment.

3. *Dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed*] The meaning rather is, So shalt thou dwell in the land, and feed securely. By the land is probably meant, in the first instance, the land of Canaan,

4 Delight thou in the Lord : and He shall give thee thy heart's desire.

5 Commit thy way unto the Lord, and put thy trust in Him : and He shall bring it to pass.

6 He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light : and thy just dealing as the noon-day.

7 Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon Him : but grieve not thyself at him, whose way doth prosper, against the man that doeth after evil counsels.

8 Leave off from wrath, and let go displeasure : fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil.

9 Wicked doers shall be rooted out : and they that patiently abide the Lord, those shall inherit the land.

10 Yet a little while, and the ungodly shall be clean gone : thou shalt look after his place, and he shall be away.

11 But the meek-spirited shall possess the earth : and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace.

12 The ungodly seeketh counsel against the just : and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The Lord shall laugh him to scorn : for He hath seen that his day is coming.

14 The ungodly have drawn out the sword, and have

which, it should be remembered, is a type of heaven. The same expression occurs in vv. 9, 11, and 22. Possession of the land in peace and security was the reward promised, in the Law of Moses, to faith and well-doing. 'If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.' Isa. i. 19. The promise of the law (Exod. xx. 12) is enlarged in the Gospel, Matt. v. 5.

5. *Shall bring it to pass*] Will act for thee, and bring thy designs to a successful issue.

7. *Hold thee still in the Lord*] "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him : fret not thyself

because of him who prospereth in his way, because of him who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

8. *Leave off from wrath, &c.*] Such precepts come with special weight from David—a man of war—often sorely tempted to avenge himself. Refer to the case of Nabal, and David's thankfulness, that he had been 'kept from evil.' 1 Sam. xxv. 39.

11. *The meek-spirited*] 'Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.' Matt. v. 5.

12. *Seeketh counsel*] "Plotteth."

13. *His day*] The day of retribution. Job xviii. 20.

bent their bow : to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as are of a right conversation.

15 Their sword shall go through their own heart : and their bow shall be broken.

16 A small thing that the righteous hath : is better than great riches of the ungodly.

17 For the arms of the ungodly shall be broken : and the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

18 The Lord knoweth the days of the godly : and their inheritance shall endure for ever.

19 They shall not be confounded in the perilous time : and in the days of dearth they shall have enough.

20 As for the ungodly, they shall perish ; and the enemies of the Lord shall consume as the fat of lambs : yea, even as the smoke shall they consume away.

21 The ungodly borroweth, and payeth not again : but the righteous is merciful, and liberal.

22 Such as are blessed of God shall possess the land : and they that are cursed of Him shall be rooted out.

23 The Lord ordereth a good man's going : and maketh his way acceptable to Himself.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be cast away : for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

25 I have been young, and now am old : and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.

14. *Conversation*] Conduct, way of life. As in 1 Pet. i. 15 : 'Be ye holy in all manner of *conversation*;' and 2 Pet. iii. 11. The word occurs in the same sense, Ps. l. 23.

15. *Their sword, &c.*] The weapons which they prepared against others, shall be turned against themselves.

16. *A small thing*] The little. 'Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith.' Prov. xv. 16.

17. *The arms*] The strength and power. Ezek. xxx. 21.

18. *Knoweth the days, &c.*] The meaning is, God has the life of the righteous especially before Him. He makes provision for them.

20. *As the fat of lambs*] As the fat is rapidly consumed in the fire of the sacrifice.

23. *Ordereth a good man's going*] That is, guideth the steps of a good man.

26 The righteous is ever merciful, and lendeth : and his seed is blessed.

27 Flee from evil, and do the thing that is good : and dwell for evermore.

28 For the Lord loveth the thing that is right : He forsaketh not his that be godly, but they are preserved for ever.

29 The unrighteous shall be punished : as for the seed of the ungodly, it shall be rooted out.

30 The righteous shall inherit the land : and dwell therein for ever.

31 The mouth of the righteous is exercised in wisdom : and his tongue will be talking of judgment.

32 The law of his God is in his heart : and his goings shall not slide.

33 The ungodly seeth the righteous : and seeketh occasion to slay him.

34 The Lord will not leave him in his hand : nor condemn him when he is judged.

35 Hope thou in the Lord, and keep his way, and He shall promote thee, that thou shalt possess the land : when the ungodly shall perish, thou shalt see it.

36 I myself have seen the ungodly in great power : and flourishing like a green bay-tree.

37 I went by, and lo, he was gone : I sought him, but his place could no where be found.

38 Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right : for that shall bring a man peace at the last.

27. *Dwell for evermore*] So shalt thou dwell in the land for ever. See verses 3 and 30.

28. *His that be godly*] "His saints." His faithful servants and worshippers.

32. *His goings shall not slide*] His footsteps slip not.

33. *Seeth*] "Watcheth" with a view to take advantage of him.

34. *In his hand, &c.*] In the

power of his persecutor ; nor condemn him when he is judged by his enemy.

37. *I went by, &c.*] Rather, as in Bib. Ver. "Yet he passed away, and lo! he was not."

38. *Keep innocency, &c.*] "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace."

39 As for the transgressors, they shall perish together : and the end of the ungodly is, they shall be rooted out at the last.

40 But the salvation of the righteous cometh of the Lord : who is also their strength in the time of trouble.

41 And the Lord shall stand by them, and save them : He shall deliver them from the ungodly, and shall save them, because they put their trust in Him.

Morning.]

PSALM XXXVIII.

[Day 8.]

SELF-ABASEMENT AND CONFESSION OF SIN.

Proper Psalm for Ash-Wednesday.

PUT me not to rebuke, O Lord, in thine anger : neither chasten me in thy heavy displeasure.

2 For thine arrows stick fast in me : and thy hand presseth me sore.

3 There is no health in my flesh, because of thy displeasure : neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sin.

4 For my wickednesses are gone over my head : and are like a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear.

5 My wounds stink, and are corrupt : through my foolishness.

6 I am brought into so great trouble and misery : that I go mourning all the day long.

7 For my loins are filled with a sore disease : and there is no whole part in my body.

Ps. XXXVIII.—The third Penitential Psalm. David describes, under the figure of bodily disease and suffering, the lamentable condition into which he had been brought by his sins: professes his trust in God, acknowledges his offences, and prays for help and deliverance.

2. *Thine arrows, &c.*] God's arrows are the sharp pains and afflictions which He sends.

3. *By reason of my sin*] In con-

sequence of the pain and suffering which my sin has brought upon me.

4. *For my wickednesses are gone over my head*] Like waves of the sea breaking over a man. Ps. cxxiv. 4.

5. *My foolishness*] My vicious and sinful conduct. Refer to Psalm xxxi. 12, and the note on it.

7. *My loins are filled, &c.*] The disease of both body and soul seems to be here described, and a sense of spiritual corruption gives new pangs to the disorders of the flesh.

8 I am feeble, and sore smitten : I have roared for the very disquietness of my heart.

9 Lord, Thou knowest all my desire : and my groaning is not hid from Thee.

10 My heart panteth, my strength hath failed me : and the sight of mine eyes is gone from me.

11 My lovers and my neighbours did stand looking upon my trouble : and my kinsmen stood afar off.

12 They also that sought after my life laid snares for me : and they that went about to do me evil talked of wickedness, and imagined deceit all the day long.

13 As for me, I was like a deaf man, and heard not : and as one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth.

14 I became even as a man that heareth not : and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

15 For in Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust : Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God.

16 I have required that they, even mine enemies, should not triumph over me : for when my foot slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me.

17 And I, truly, am set in the plague : and my heaviness is ever in my sight.

11. *Stand looking upon*] "Stand aloof from." We are reminded by these words, of the scene of our Lord's crucifixion. See Luke xxiii. 49. See also a very striking passage in Job xix. 13—20.

12. *Talked of wickedness, &c.*] Plotted mischief in their talk, and meditated deceit.

13. *As for me, &c.*] Compare verses 13—15, with St. Peter's description of our Saviour's patient suffering. 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23; see also 1 Sam. x. 27; Matt. xxvi. 62; John xix. 9.

16. *I have required, &c.*] I have prayed earnestly, saying, Let not mine enemies rejoice over me.

17. *Set in the plague*] The word *plague* is the literal rendering of *plaga*—wound, blow, or stroke—of an old Latin Version, in which the clause is translated, 'I am prepared or ready for the stroke,' &c. See Isai. l. 6. Pestilence being justly regarded as a stroke or infliction of God (2 Sam. xxiv. 21), and the greatest and most terrible of all temporal chastisements, has come to be called emphatically *the plague*. In a similar way God's judgments upon Pharaoh and his people are commonly called the *plagues* of Egypt. See also Ps. xxxix. 11. The Bible Version is, "am ready to halt."

18 For I will confess my wickedness : and be sorry for my sin.

19 But mine enemies live, and are mighty : and they that hate me wrongfully are many in number.

20 They also that reward evil for good are against me : because I follow the thing that good is.

21 Forsake me not, O Lord my God : be not Thou far from me.

22 Haste Thee to help me : O Lord God of my salvation.

PSALM XXXIX.

THE SHORTNESS AND VANITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

Psalm used in the Burial Service.

I SAID, 'I will take heed to my ways : that I offend not in my tongue.

2 'I will keep my mouth as it were with a bridle : while the ungodly is in my sight.'

3 I held my tongue, and spake nothing : I kept silence, yea, even from good words ; but it was pain and grief to me.

4 My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled : and at the last I spake with my tongue ;

5 'Lord, let me know mine end, and the number of my days : that I may be certified how long I have to live.

6 'Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were

19. *But mine enemies live, and are mighty*] While the Psalmist is helpless and in a manner dead, his enemies are living and powerful.

20. *They also that reward, &c.*] "They also that render evil for good are my adversaries."

Ps. XXXIX.—David, labouring, it would seem, under some trouble or sickness, resolves that no word of complaint shall escape his lips in the presence of the ungodly ; but

at last, stirred by the spirit within him, he pours out his soul to God in mournful reflections on the shortness of life and the vanity of all earthly things. He concludes with a prayer to God, his only hope, for restoration to health, and for a longer continuance upon earth.

2. *With a bridle*] More properly, in a muzzle ; I will compel myself to keep silence. Compare James i. 26 ; iii. 2.

6. *As it were a span long*] "As an hand-breadth."

a span long : and mine age is even as nothing in respect of Thee ; and verily every man living is altogether vanity.

7 'For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain : he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.'

8 And now, Lord, what is my hope : truly my hope is even in Thee.

9 Deliver me from all mine offences : and make me not a rebuke unto the foolish.

10 I became dumb, and opened not my mouth : for it was thy doing.

11 Take thy plague away from me : I am even consumed by the means of thy heavy hand.

12 When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, Thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment : every man therefore is but vanity.

13 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with thine ears consider my calling : hold not thy peace at my tears:

14 For I am a stranger with Thee : and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

6. *In respect of Thee*] That is, in comparison with Thee, who art eternal.

7. *Shall gather them*] Shall receive and enjoy them.

8. *What is my hope*] "What wait I for?"

9. *A rebuke unto the foolish*] An object of reproach to the worldly and wicked.

10. *I became dumb*] I resigned myself, and uttered no complaint, (but only a prayer, vv. 9, 11;) because it is Thou, Lord, who hast chastened me. See Job xl. 4, 5. Compare Isa. liii. 7, and Matt. xxvii. 12.

— *It was thy doing*] My trial was of God's sending, and according to his will.

11. *Thy plague*] Rather, "Thy

stroke," or heavy chastisement. Refer to Ps. xxxviii. 17, and note.

11. *By the means*] "By the blow."

12. *His beauty*] Not merely grace and comeliness; but every personal quality of which he is naturally proud.

— *A moth fretting a garment*] Sickness and affliction waste and disfigure the strength and beauty of man, as the moth eats into and destroys the rich garments laid up in store by the rich in Eastern countries. Job xiii. 28.

13. *Hold not thy peace*] Remain not silent, but hear my prayer in affliction, and help me.

14. *A stranger with Thee, and a sojourner*] A traveller on his way who seeks shelter and rest for a few

15 O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength : before I go hence, and be no more seen.

PSALM XL.

THE OBEDIENCE AND WILLING SACRIFICE OF CHRIST.

Proper Psalm for Good Friday.

I WAITED patiently for the Lord : and He inclined unto me, and heard my calling.

2 He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay : and set my feet upon the rock, and ordered my goings.

3 And He hath put a new song in my mouth : even a thanksgiving unto our God.

4 Many shall see it, and fear : and shall put their trust in the Lord.

5 Blessed is the man that hath set his hope in the Lord : and turned not unto the proud, and to such as go about with lies.

6 O Lord my God, great are the wondrous works which Thou hast done, like as be also thy thoughts which are to us-ward : and yet there is no man that ordereth them unto Thee.

days. 'They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth.' Heb. xi. 13. Refer to Gen. xlvii. 9.

Ps. XL.—St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, x. 5—7, quotes vv. 8—10 of this Psalm as spoken by David in the person of Christ; and for this reason it has been selected by our Church as a Proper Psalm for the day of our Lord's crucifixion.

2. *Horrible pit*] The pitfall prepared by his treacherous enemies into which he had fallen. Ps. vii. 16; xxxv. 7.

— *Ordered my goings*] Enabled me to walk firmly and securely.

3. *Hath put a new song, &c.*]

Hath by a fresh act of mercy given me a new reason for celebrating his praise.

4. *Shall see it, and fear*] Shall become acquainted with God's merciful dealings with me, and learn to fear Jehovah who has shown himself so ready to send deliverance to his servants. "There is mercy with Thee, therefore shalt Thou be feared." Ps. cxxx. 4.

5. *Such as go about with lies*]

"Such as turn aside to lies."

6. *Thy thoughts which are to us-ward*] Thy thoughts towards us; that is, Thy counsels for the good of man.

— *That ordereth them, &c.*]

"They cannot be reckoned up in order to Thee." See Rom. xi. 34 :

7 If I should declare them, and speak of them : they should be more than I am able to express.

8 Sacrifice, and meat-offering, Thou wouldst not : but mine ears hast Thou opened.

9 Burnt-offerings, and sacrifice for sin, hast Thou not required : then said I, Lo, I come,

10 In the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will, O my God : I am content to do it ; yea, thy law is within my heart.

11 I have declared thy righteousness in the great congregation : lo, I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that Thou knowest.

12 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart : my talk hath been of thy truth, and of thy salvation.

13 I have not kept back thy loving mercy and truth : from the great congregation.

14 Withdraw not Thou thy mercy from me, O Lord : let thy loving-kindness and thy truth alway preserve me.

15 For innumerable troubles are come about me ; my sins have taken such hold upon me that I am not able

'Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor ?'

7. *If I should declare them, &c.*] The Bible Version is clearer, "If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

8. *Sacrifice, and meat-offering, Thou wouldst not*] 'I desired mercy, and not sacrifice.' Hosea vi. 6. See also 1 Sam. xv. 22 ; and compare Heb. x. 4.

— *But mine ears hast Thou opened*] Thou hast given me the disposition to hear ; a readiness to obey. See 2 Sam. vii. 27, margin ; Isa. i. 5. It was God's purpose to accept the voluntary obedience and sacrifice of Christ instead of 'the blood of bulls and goats,' and

the frequent sin-offerings required by the law of Moses. Jer. vii. 22, 23.

10. *In the volume of the book*] In the Holy Scriptures, which were kept together in a roll, or volume. Luke xxiv. 44.

11. *The great congregation*] That is, the great body of Jewish worshippers. Dent. xxx. 30 ; 1 Chron. xxix. 1, 20.

15. *My sins have taken such hold*] The Messiah calls those sins his own, of which He bore the punishment. 'The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' Isa. liii. 6.

— *I am not able to look up*] I cannot see for sorrow. See Psalm xxxviii. 10. 'The sight of mine eyes is gone from me.'

to look up : yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me.

16 O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to deliver me : make haste, O Lord, to help me.

17 Let them be ashamed, and confounded together, that seek after my soul to destroy it : let them be driven backward, and put to rebuke, that wish me evil.

18 Let them be desolate, and rewarded with shame : that say unto me, 'Fie upon thee, fie upon thee.'

19 Let all those that seek Thee be joyful and glad in Thee : and let such as love thy salvation say alway, 'The Lord be praised.'

20 As for me, I am poor and needy : but the Lord careth for me.

21 Thou art my helper and redeemer : make no long tarrying, O my God.

Evening.

PSALM XLI.

[*Day 8.*

THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE MERCIFUL.—THE FALSE FRIEND.

BLESSED is he that considereth the poor and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.

2 The Lord preserve him, and keep him alive, that he may be blessed upon earth : and deliver not Thou him into the will of his enemies.

17, 18. *Let them be ashamed, &c.*] A prayer that God will defeat and confound the counsels of his enemies ; or perhaps a prophecy of the shame and misery which would befall the Jews, for their rejection of the Messiah.

Ps. XLI. After pronouncing a blessing on the merciful, David complains of the malicious calumnies of his foes, and of the treachery of one ungrateful friend. The Psalm

may have been suggested by the rebellion of Absalom.

1. *Blessed is he, &c.*] 'Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy.' Matt. v. 7.

2. *The Lord preserve him, &c.*] The form of prayer or blessing is changed into a promise or assurance in the Bib. Ver. where the future tense is used : thus, "The Lord *will* preserve him." "He *shall be* blessed," "Thou *will not* deliver him," and in ver. 3, "The Lord *will* strengthen him."

3 The Lord comfort him, when he lieth sick upon his bed : make Thou all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, 'Lord, be merciful unto me : heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.'

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me : 'When shall he die, and his name perish ?'

6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity : and his heart conceiveth falsehood within himself ; and when he cometh forth he telleth it.

7 All mine enemies whisper together against me : even against me do they imagine this evil.

8 'Let the sentence of guiltiness proceed against him : and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more.'

9 Yea, even mine own familiar friend, whom I trusted : who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great wait for me.

10 But be Thou merciful unto me, O Lord : raise Thou me up again, and I shall reward them.

11 By this I know Thou favourest me : that mine enemy doth not triumph against me.

12 And when I am in my health, Thou upholdest me : and shalt set me before thy face for ever.

3. *Make Thou all his bed, &c.*] Thou wilt give him ease in his sickness—wilt refresh and revive him.

4. *I said*] As for me, I said.

6. *And if he come to see me*] If any one of my enemies visits me, he uses deceitful words ; he stores up matter for slanderous reports ; and when he goes forth again into the world, he spreads them abroad.

8. *Let the sentence of guiltiness*] David's enemies speak against him as if he were smitten of God for his sins, and they pray that he may never rise up from his bed of sickness. Compare Isa. liii. 4 ; Luke xxiii. 23.

9. *Mine own familiar friend*] It is probable that the crafty and perfid-

dious Ahithophel, 2 Sam. xv. 12, 31, is here glanced at, but the words are a direct prophecy of the treachery of Judas. See John xiii. 18.

9. *Hath laid great wait*] Hath closely watched, with a view to ensnare me.

10. *Reward them*] Requite them according to their false and cruel dealings. To *reward* means to pay back either good or evil.

12. *And when I am in my health, &c.*] Rather as in Bib. Ver. "And as for me, Thou beholdest me in my integrity."

— *Before thy face*] That is, to stand in thy presence, and to enjoy the light of thy countenance. See Ps. xxi. 6 ; Prov. xxii. 29 ; Matt. xviii. 10.

13 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel : world without end. Amen.

PSALM XLII.

ARDENT LONGING FOR THE SANCTUARY AND WORSHIP OF GOD.

LIKE as the hart desireth the water-brooks : so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.

2 My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God : when shall I come to appear before the presence of God ?

3 My tears have been my meat day and night : while they daily say unto me, 'Where is now thy God ?'

4 Now, when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself : for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God ;

5 In the voice of praise and thanksgiving : among such as keep holy-day.

13. *Blessed be the Lord God, &c.*] This doxology terminates the first of the five books into which the Psalms were divided by the Jews.

Ps. XLII.—We now enter upon the SECOND division or Book of Psalms, containing thirty in all ; the first eight of which (xlii.—xlix.) are ascribed in the Bible titles to the sons of KORAH—a family of singers, who continued attached to the musical service, first of the tabernacle and afterwards of the temple, from the time of David to that of Jehoshaphat. 2 Chron. xx. 19. They were companions of David in his flight from Absalom, and partakers of the same dangers and adventures. No wonder therefore that the soul of David seems to animate the songs of the Korahites. The forty-second and following Psalm, which by some are supposed to be properly but one,

express the feelings of a pious Israelite deprived of the privilege of public worship. They suit the circumstances of David, when compelled to flee to the country beyond Jordan. 2 Sam. xv. 14. Others think that they belong rather to the reign of Ahaz. (2 Chron. xxxviii.), a period of national disgrace and apostasy, B.C. 741.

1. *Desireth*] "Panteth after."

2. *When shall I come to appear*] When shall I be permitted to enter again into the sanctuary, where God is more immediately present ?

3. *My meat*] "My food."

4. *When I think thereupon, &c.*] When I recall to mind these things I abandon myself to grief (my heart is poured out like water), for I used in past days to accompany and lead the joyful throng of worshippers into the house of God.

5. *In the voice of praise*] "With the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday."

6 Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul : and why art thou so disquieted within me ?

7 Put thy trust in God : for I will yet give Him thanks for the help of his countenance.

8 My God, my soul is vexed within me : therefore will I remember Thee concerning the land of Jordan, and the little hill of Hermon.

9 One deep calleth another, because of the noise of the water-pipes : all thy waves and storms have gone over me.

10 The Lord hath granted his loving-kindness in the day-time : and in the night-season did I sing of Him, and made my prayer unto the God of my life.

11 I will say unto the God of my strength, 'Why hast Thou forgotten me : why go I thus heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me ?'

12 My bones are smitten asunder as with a sword : while mine enemies that trouble me cast me in the teeth ;

13 Namely, while they say daily unto me : 'Where is now thy God ?'

14 Why art thou so vexed, O my soul : and why art thou so disquieted within me ?

15 O put thy trust in God : for I will yet thank Him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

8. *Concerning the land of Jordan*] Therefore do I call Thee to remembrance from the land beyond Jordan and the mountain range of Hermon, that is, from the country east of Jordan, to which David had fled. 2 Sam. xvii. 22.

— *The little hill* or the hill Mit-zar, was probably a spur of Mount Hermon.

9. *One deep calleth another*] "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts."—Waves in succession arise as if one called up the other : so the floods of calamity and affliction, troubles upon troubles, burst upon and over

my head.

10. *The Lord hath granted, &c.*] The Lord will show forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and in the night his song shall be with me, even a prayer unto the God of my life. Compare Bib. Ver.

12. *My bones are smitten asunder, &c.*] The taunts and reproaches of my enemies pierce my very soul—as a sword cuts through the bones.

— *Cast me in the teeth*] Taunt and revile me.

15. *Which is the help of my countenance*] Whose protection and support give to my face the expression of confidence and joy.

PSALM XLIII.

PRAYER FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE.

GIVE sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people : O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.

2 For Thou art the God of my strength, why hast Thou put me from Thee : and why go I so heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me ?

3 O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me : and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling.

4 And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness : and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God, my God.

5 Why art thou so heavy, O my soul : and why art thou so disquieted within me ?

6 O put thy trust in God : for I will yet give Him thanks, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Morning.]

PSALM XLIV.

[Day 9.]

THE VOICE OF THE CHURCH UNDER PERSECUTION.

WE have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us : what Thou hast done in their time of old ;

Ps. XLIII.—This, like the preceding Psalm, which it closely resembles, may be recommended to be used by persons suffering from depression of mind or despondency.

1. *Give sentence with me*] Pronounce judgment in my favour.

3. *Send out thy light and thy truth*] Spread abroad the rays of spiritual light and knowledge, and make manifest the truth of thy promises.

Ps. XLIV. suits the times and

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circumstances of Sennacherib's invasion in the days of Hezekiah, B.C. 713. See 2 Kings xviii. 13. The Psalmist gratefully acknowledges God's wonderful mercies vouchsafed to his people in the old time, bemoans their present unhappy condition, asserts their faithfulness, and appeals to God for deliverance.

1. *We have heard, &c.*] This verse, somewhat amplified, is adopted as a ground of confidence and plea for deliverance in our Litany.

2 How Thou hast driven out the heathen with thy hand, and planted them in : how Thou hast destroyed the nations, and cast them out.

3 For they gat not the land in possession through their own sword : neither was it their own arm that helped them ;

4 But thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance : because Thou hadst a favour unto them.

5 Thou art my King, O God : send help unto Jacob.

6 Through Thee will we overthrow our enemies : and in thy Name will we tread them under, that rise up against us.

7 For I will not trust in my bow : it is not my sword that shall help me ;

8 But it is Thou that savest us from our enemies : and putttest them to confusion that hate us.

9 We make our boast of God all day long : and will praise thy Name for ever.

10 But now Thou art far off, and putttest us to confusion : and goest not forth with our armies.

11 Thou makest us to turn our backs upon our enemies : so that they which hate us spoil our goods.

12 Thou letttest us be eaten up like sheep : and hast scattered us among the heathen.

13 Thou sellest thy people for nought : and takest no money for them.

' O God, we have heard with our ears,' &c.

2. *How Thou hast driven out*] For the history of the conquest of Canaan, see the Book of Joshua, especially x. 9, 10, and xxiv. 12.

— *Planted them in*] That is, planted our forefathers in the land of Canaan.

— *And cast them out*] Or the words may mean didst cause our fathers, like the roots and branches of the vine, to spread abroad over the land. See Ps. lxxx. 8—11.

5 *Unto Jacob*] That is, unto the people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob.

11. *Spoil our goods*] Seize our property as their spoil or plunder.

12. *Be eaten up like sheep*] The meaning is, 'Thou deliverest up as sheep which are to be slaughtered for food.

13. *Thou sellest thy people for nought, &c.*] Meaning, 'Thou treatest them as a thing of no value, and for which no price would be given.

14 Thou makest us to be rebuked of our neighbours : to be laughed to scorn, and had in derision of them that are round about us.

15 Thou makest us to be a by-word among the heathen : and that the people shake their heads at us:

16 My confusion is daily before me : and the shame of my face hath covered me ;

17 For the voice of the slanderer and blasphemer : for the enemy and avenger.

18 And though all this be come upon us, yet do we not forget Thee : nor behave ourselves frowardly in thy covenant.

19 Our heart is not turned back : neither our steps gone out of thy way ;

20 No, not when Thou hast smitten us into the place of dragons : and covered us with the shadow of death.

21 If we have forgotten the Name of our God, and holden up our hands to any strange god : shall not God search it out? for He knoweth the very secrets of the heart.

22 For thy sake also are we killed all the day long : and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain.

23 Up, Lord, why sleepest Thou : awake, and be not absent from us for ever.

17. *For the voice, &c.*] It was by reason of the taunts and revilings of the enemy that the Psalmist was put to shame.

18. *Behave ourselves frowardly*] Prove faithless to our covenant with Thee, and turn aside to other gods. Allusion may perhaps be made in verses 18—21, to the restoration of religion, which was brought about in Hezekiah's reign, 2 Chron. xxix. —xxx.

20. *The place of dragons*] That is, the desert; the abode of wild beasts and venomous serpents.

21. *Holden up our hands*] "Stretched out our hands" in prayer to any other god. Jehovah is appealed to as knowing the hearts of all men, that his people, though sorely troubled and afflicted, had remained constant to his worship. 1 John iii. 20.

22. *Killed all the day long*] A striking description of suffering and persecution which St. Paul quotes as applicable to the Christians of his time. Rom. viii. 36. See also 1 Cor. xv. 31. 'I die daily.'

23. *Why sleepest Thou*] The

24 Wherefore hidest Thou thy face : and forgettest our misery and trouble ?

25 For our soul is brought low, even unto the dust : our belly cleaveth unto the ground.

26 Arise, and help us : and deliver us for thy mercy's sake.

PSALM XLV.

THE MARRIAGE OF CHRIST WITH HIS SPOUSE THE CHURCH.

Proper Psalm for Christmas Day.

MY heart is inditing of a good matter : I speak of the things which I have made unto the King.

2 My tongue is the pen : of a ready writer.

3 Thou art fairer than the children of men : full of grace are thy lips, because God hath blessed Thee for ever.

4 Gird Thee with thy sword upon thy thigh, O Thou most Mighty : according to thy worship and renown.

5 Good luck have Thou with thine honour : ride on, because of the word of truth, of meekness, and righteousness ; and thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things.

holy Psalmist employs the boldest language of poetry in appealing to God to resume his watchful care and protection of his people. Strictly speaking, as we know, He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. Ps. cxxi. 4.

Ps. XLV.—In this Psalm the poetical language and imagery suitable for the description of a royal marriage are employed to shadow forth the espousals of King Messiah with his Bride the Church. In various parts of Scripture the Church is called the Bride of Christ. See Ephes. v. 23; Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 9.

1. *My heart is inditing, &c.*] My heart is overflowing with a goodly subject ; I will sing the song which

I have made concerning the King.

3. *Thou art fairer, &c.*] The Psalmist addresses Him who was 'the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person.' Heb. i. 3; Zech. ix. 17. See also Luke iv. 22; John vii. 46.

4. *Gird Thee with thy sword*] The Messiah is here and in many other places represented as a mighty conqueror. See for example Rev. vi. 2. His *sword* is the Word of God. Ephes. vi. 17; Heb. iv. 12.

5. *Good luck have Thou*] A form of blessing which is equivalent to 'God speed and prosper Thee.'

— *Because of the word of truth, &c.*] In the cause of truth, meekness, and righteousness. Isa. xi. 4.

— *Thy right hand shall teach Thee*] By thy might Thou shalt accomplish wonderful things.

6 Thy arrows are very sharp, and the people shall be subdued unto Thee : even in the midst among the King's enemies.

7 Thy seat, O God, endureth for ever : the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

8 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity : wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

9 All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia : out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad.

10 Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women : upon thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours.

11 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear : forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.

12 So shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty : for He is thy Lord God, and worship thou Him.

13 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with

6. *Thy arrows are very sharp, &c.*] "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies, whereby the people fall under Thee." Spiritual weapons are here signified, and spiritual conquests foretold.

7. *Thy seat, O God*] A prophecy quoted by St. Paul and applied by him to our Saviour Christ. Heb. i. 8.

— *A right sceptre*] The sceptre was the staff of kingly authority; a *right sceptre* is a sceptre of justice and righteousness.

8. *Thy fellows*] Thy companions, thy fellow kings. 1 Kings iii. 11—13; Rev. xix. 16.

9. *All thy garments, &c.*] The King, arrayed in robes fragrant with sweet perfumes, is here represented as a bridegroom coming forth from a royal palace, the chambers of which were inlaid with ivory. *Exod. xxx. 23, 24.*

9. *Cassia*] The bark of an aromatic tree like cinnamon. It was imported from India.

10. *Kings' daughters*] The Queen represented as standing at the right hand of the King is his Spouse the Church: the kings' daughters, her attendants, signify the Gentile cities and countries who come to pay homage to the King and seek admission into his kingdom.

11. *Hearken, O daughter, &c.*] The Bride,—that is, the Church,—is now addressed, and called upon to forget the world which she has left, and give herself to her Lord.

13. *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift*] Tyre seems to be specially mentioned among the attendant virgins, because Tyre was a wealthy, flourishing city, still heathen, though on the borders of the Holy Land. The presence of

a gift : like as the rich also among the people shall make their supplication before Thee.

14 The King's daughter is all glorious within : her clothing is of wrought gold.

15 She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work : the virgins that be her fellows shall bear her company, and shall be brought unto Thee.

16 With joy and gladness shall they be brought : and shall enter into the King's palace.

17 Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children : whom thou mayest make princes in all lands.

18 I will remember thy Name from one generation to another : therefore shall the people give thanks unto Thee, world without end.

PSALM XLVI.

GOD THE REFUGE OF HIS PEOPLE.

GOD is our hope and strength : a very present help in trouble.

the daughter of Tyre is a type of the accession of the Gentiles to the Church.

13. *Like as the rich, &c.*] "Even the rich among the people shall in-treat thy favour."

14. *All glorious within*] The King's daughter, arrayed in her glorious bridal apparel, is represented as awaiting, within her Father's palace, the procession to the house of the Bridegroom. The words, however, may refer to the inward beauty and purity of the Bride, and so typify the Church, which was to be presented to her Lord,—a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but . . . holy and without blemish.' Ephes. v. 27.

15. *The virgins that be her fellows*] That is, of royal lineage, or equal rank with herself. The Gentile cities or communities which accept the invitation of the King,

and follow his Spouse the Church.

17. *Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children*] Instead of Gentile or Jewish parents and kindred, a numerous and illustrious family of spiritual children in all lands. Rev. i. 6.

18. *Will remember*] Will celebrate thy name and make it to be remembered unto all generations.

Ps. XLVI. composed perhaps at the time of the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army, B.C. 713, is a thankful expression of the confidence of the Church in the protection of Jehovah, whatever storms may threaten her safety. It is an invaluable source of consolation to Christian families, and to individual believers in seasons of trial, peril, or persecution.

1. *A very present help*] Always at hand and ready to succour.

2 Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved : and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea ;

3 Though the waters thereof rage and swell : and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.

4 The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God : the holy place of the tabernacle of the most Highest.

5 God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed : God shall help her, and that right early.

6 The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved : but God hath shewed his voice, and the earth shall melt away.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us : the God of Jacob is our refuge.

8 O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord : what destruction He hath brought upon the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease in all the world : He breaketh the bow, and knappeth the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariots in the fire.

10 Be still then, and know that I am God : I will be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The Lord of hosts is with us : the God of Jacob is our refuge.

4. *The rivers of the flood thereof*] "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." A striking contrast is here introduced. The city of Jerusalem, itself an emblem of the Church of God, lying in peace and security, is, to the world agitated by wars and commotions, as a gently flowing river to the raging and stormy ocean. In Scripture a calm refreshing river is a frequent emblem of God's grace and favour, and of the comfort of his *Holy Spirit*. Ps. xxiii. 2, Isa. viii. 6; Zech. xiv. 8; Rev. xxii. 1.

7. *The Lord of hosts is with us*] If the Israelite could appeal with confidence to the God of armies, with even more assured faith may the Christian turn for help and salvation to Emmanuel, *God with us*. Matt. i. 23; Rom. viii. 31.

8. *What destruction, &c.*] He makes desolation on the earth by the overthrow of the enemies of his people.

9. *He maketh wars to cease, &c.*] That is, by conquering his enemies and reducing them to subjection.

— *Knappeth*] Breaketh sharp off, snappeth.

Evening.]

PSALM XLVII.

[Day 9.]

JEHOVAH, THE GOD BOTH OF JEWS AND GENTILES.

Proper Psalm for Ascension Day.

O CLAP your hands together, all ye people : O sing unto God with the voice of melody.

2 For the Lord is high, and to be feared : He is the great King upon all the earth.

3 He shall subdue the people under us : and the nations under our feet.

4 He shall choose out an heritage for us : even the worship of Jacob, whom He loved.

5 God is gone up with a merry noise : and the Lord with the sound of the trump.

6 O sing praises, sing praises unto our God : O sing praises, sing praises unto our King.

7 For God is the King of all the earth : sing ye praises with understanding.

8 God reigneth over the heathen : God sitteth upon his holy seat.

9 The princes of the people are joined unto the people of the God of Abraham : for God, which is very

Ps. XLVII. seems to have been written in celebration of some signal victory or deliverance, possibly the defeat of the combined forces of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, as described in 2 Chron. xx. 22, about the year B.C. 896.

1. *The voice of melody*] Or, "The voice of triumph."

2. *Upon all the earth*] Rather, as in the Bible, "over all the earth." Compare Matt. xxviii. 18.

3. *He shall subdue the people under us*] The Jews, misinterpreting this and similar prophecies, expected their Messiah to come as an earthly king and conqueror, whereas the prophecies really refer to his spiritual power and dominion. 1 Cor. xv. 25.

4. *Even the worship of Jacob*] The honour or "excellency of Jacob," namely, the land of Canaan his inheritance, which was 'the glory of all lands.'

5. *God is gone up, &c.*] God is thus poetically described as returning to his throne on high after having triumphed over the enemies of his people; but the words have ever been regarded by the Church as applicable to the ascension of Christ into Heaven; and on this account the Psalm is appointed to be read on Holy Thursday.

9. *The princes of the people*] The meaning seems to be that the heathen and the Jewish people are united under one heavenly King. See Isa. xiv. 1.

high exalted, doth defend the earth as it were with a shield.

PSALM XLVIII.

JERUSALEM A TYPE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Proper Psalm for Whit-Sunday.

GREAT is the Lord, and highly to be praised : in the city of our God, even upon his holy hill.

2 The hill of Sion is a fair place, and the joy of the whole earth : upon the north-side lieth the city of the great King ; God is well known in her palaces as a sure refuge.

3 For lo, the kings of the earth : are gathered, and gone by together.

4 They marvelled to see such things : they were astonished, and suddenly cast down.

5 Fear came there upon them, and sorrow : as upon a woman in her travail.

6 Thou shalt break the ships of the sea : through the east-wind.

9. *As it were with a shield*] "The shields of the earth belong unto God." The meaning is, either, that God Himself is the shield and defence of his people; or, that He uses princes and rulers as the protectors of their subjects. See Hosea iv. 18, where, for the word 'rulers,' which occurs in the text, the reading in the margin is 'shields.'

Psalm XLVIII.—The language which is used in this Psalm to describe the external beauty and solid strength of the city of Mount Sion, bears an obvious spiritual application to the true Church of God which is 'built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.' Ephes. ii. 20.

3, 4. *For lo, the kings of the earth, &c.*] This passage has pro-

bably reference to the same event in Jewish history, as that described in Ps. xlvii., viz. the wonderful interposition of Jehovah, in the destruction, without a battle, of the confederate armies, which came up under their respective kings against Jerusalem, in the time of Jehoshaphat.

6. *Thou shalt break, &c.*] "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind." The panic of the confederate kings is compared in ver. 5 to the alarms of a woman in child-birth ; and in ver. 6 to the terror of mariners when a ship is overtaken by a violent storm. It may be well to bear in mind, that as "Tarshish" is supposed to have been a port on the coast of Spain, near Cadiz, "ships of Tarshish" is an expression used to signify large and powerful vessels suited for long voyages.

The east wind is the most violent

7 Like as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God : God upholdeth the same for ever.

8 We wait for thy loving-kindness, O God : in the midst of thy temple.

9 O God, according to thy Name, so is thy praise unto the world's end : thy right hand is full of righteousness.

10 Let the mount Sion rejoice, and the daughter of Judah be glad : because of thy judgments.

11 Walk about Sion, and go round about her : and tell the towers thereof.

12 Mark well her bulwarks, set up her houses : that ye may tell them that come after.

13 For this God is our God for ever and ever : He shall be our guide unto death.

PSALM XLIX.

THE VANITY OF RICHES.

O HEAR ye this, all ye people : ponder it with your ears, all ye that dwell in the world ;

and tempestuous wind in the Mediterranean.

7. *Like as we have heard, so have we seen*] We have now seen wonders like those in the old time of which our fathers have told us, and we are assured thereby of God's favour and protection to his holy city.

— *God upholdeth the same, &c.*] "God will establish it [Jerusalem] for ever."

8. *We wait for*] Rather, we meditate upon thy goodness, &c.

9. *O God, according to thy Name, so is thy praise*] By the 'Name' of God are expressed in Scripture his attributes, as power, justice, and mercy; and wherever throughout the world his Name is thus known, there the sacrifice

of praise is offered to Him.

10. *Because of thy judgments*] Thy judgments upon her enemies.

11. *Tell the towers thereof*] Count the number of her towers.

12. *Set up her houses*] "Consider her palaces." The people are invited to survey the Holy City in her strength and beauty, resting in safety under the shield of her Heavenly Protector. It will be borne in mind that Jerusalem is an emblem of the Church of Christ.

Ps. XLIX.—The lesson of Divine wisdom to which the attention of the whole world is here so solemnly invited is this:—The servants of God have little reason to look with envy on the riches and prosperity of the wicked, for death will soon

2 High and low, rich and poor : one with another.

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom : and my heart shall muse of understanding.

4 I will incline mine ear to the parable : and show my dark speech upon the harp.

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of wickedness : and when the wickedness of my heels compasseth me round about ?

6 There be some that put their trust in their goods : and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.

7 But no man may deliver his brother ; nor make agreement unto God for him ;

8 For it cost more to redeem their souls : so that he must let that alone for ever ;

9 Yea, though he live long : and see not the grave.

10 For he seeth that wise men also die, and perish together : as well as the ignorant and foolish, and leave their riches for other.

11 And yet they think that their houses shall continue for ever : and that their dwelling-places shall endure from one generation to another ; and call the lands after their own names.

come and carry them off ; while the righteous have the promise of deliverance from the troubles of this world, and have, moreover, the hope of a life beyond the grave.

4. *I will incline mine ear to the parable, &c.* I will listen to hear the secret meanings of God ; I will declare his hidden counsels in a psalm to the music of the harp.

5. *In the days of wickedness* Rather, of evil or adversity.

— *When the wickedness of my heels, &c.* When my treacherous enemies come round about me to catch me by the heel, that is, to trip me up.

7. *But no man, &c.* No one, however rich he may be, “can by any means redeem his brother, nor

give to God a ransom for him.” Matt. xvi. 26.

8. *For it cost more, &c.* “For the redemption of their soul is precious” [costly], so that such an attempt must be for ever abandoned. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. The inference is plain, that the Redeemer of sinners must be not human but Divine.

9. *Yea, though he live long, and see not the grave* The sense, according to the Bible Version, is, no man can redeem his brother, so “that he should still live for ever and not see corruption.”

10. *For he seeth* For it is seen that wise men also die, as well as the foolish, and, therefore, that man’s wisdom is no security against death.

12 Nevertheless, man will not abide in honour : seeing he may be compared unto the beasts that perish ; this is the way of them.

13 This is their foolishness : and their posterity praise their saying.

14 They lie in the hell like sheep, death gnaweth upon them, and the righteous shall have domination over them in the morning : their beauty shall consume in the sepulchre out of their dwelling.

15 But God hath delivered my soul from the place of hell : for He shall receive me.

16 Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich : or if the glory of his house be increased ;

17 For he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth : neither shall his pomp follow him.

18 For while he lived, he counted himself an happy man : and so long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee.

19 He shall follow the generation of his fathers : and shall never see light.

12. *Nevertheless, man will not abide, &c.*] Yet man, though in a state of honour and prosperity, abideth not. "He is like the beasts that perish."

13. *This is their foolishness, &c.*] "This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings." The sons follow in the footsteps of their fathers.

14. *They lie in the hell like sheep*] They are laid in the grave like sheep in a slaughter-house.

— *Death gnaweth upon them*] "Death shall feed on them."

— *Shall have domination over them in the morning*] Shall get the better of them ; shall have the advantage over them as soon as the hours of darkness are over. Herein, probably, we may discern a 'parable' or 'dark speech'

(ver. 4), prefiguring the superiority or triumph of the righteous over the wicked—when once the grave is passed, and the morning of the resurrection has risen.

14. *Out of their dwelling*] That is, far away from their own homes.

15. *God . . . the place of hell*] "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave."

17. *Shall carry nothing, &c.*] Refer to the parable of the rich fool. Luke xii. 16—21.

18. *So long as thou doest well unto thyself, &c.*] The world is apt to flatter those who surround themselves with the good things of this life.

19. *Shall follow the generation, &c.*] Shall go to the grave, like his fathers before him.

20 Man being in honour hath no understanding :
but is compared unto the beasts that perish.

Morning.]

PSALM L.

[*Day 10.*]

FORMAL AND SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

THE Lord, even the most mighty God, hath spoken :
and called the world, from the rising up of the
sun, unto the going down thereof.

2 Out of Sion hath God appeared : in perfect beauty.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence :
there shall go before Him a consuming fire, and a
mighty tempest shall be stirred up round about Him.

4 He shall call the heaven from above : and the
earth, that He may judge his people.

5 'Gather my saints together unto Me : those that
have made a covenant with Me with sacrifice.'

6 And the heaven shall declare his righteousness :
for God is Judge Himself.

7 'Hear, O my people, and I will speak : I myself
will testify against thee, O Israel ; for I am God, even
thy God.

8 'I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices,

20. *Man being in honour, &c.]*
"Man that is in honour, and un-
derstandeth not, is like the beasts
that perish."

Ps. L.—God summons all man-
kind to hear his judgment on his
people Israel, whom He condemns
for overlooking the spiritual mean-
ing and real purpose of the law of
Moses. Compare Micah vi. The
judgment of the Jews is a type of
the judgment which awaits the
whole world at the last day. This
Psalm would serve to prepare the
more thoughtful Israelites for the
cessation of Levitical sacrifices and
the introduction of a more spiritual
law. *It is ascribed to Asaph, one*

of David's chief musicians. See
1 Chron. vi. 39 ; 2 Chron. xxix. 30.

2. *Out of Sion, &c.]* "Out of
Zion, the perfection of beauty, God
hath shined." Compare Micah i. 2.

3. *Shall not keep silence]* Shall
not refrain from announcing his
law. He shall proclaim it with a
voice of thunder. The allusion is
to the awful thunderings and light-
nings which attended the delivery
of the Law on Mount Sinai. See
Exod. xix. 16 ; Heb. xii. 18, 19.

4. *He shall call the heaven, &c.]*
'I call heaven and earth to witness
against you this day.' Deut. iv. 26:

8. *I will not reprove thee, &c.]*
I make no charge against thee on
account of sacrifices or offerings

or for thy burnt-offerings : because they were not always before Me.

9 'I will take no bullock out of thine house : nor he-goat out of thy folds.

10 'For all the beasts of the forest are mine : and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 'I know all the fowls upon the mountains : and the wild beasts of the field are in my sight.

12 'If I be hungry, I will not tell thee : for the whole world is mine, and all that is therein.

13 'Thinkest thou that I will eat bulls' flesh : and drink the blood of goats ?

14 'Offer unto God thanksgiving : and pay thy vows unto the most Highest.

15 'And call upon Me in the time of trouble : so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise Me.'

16 But unto the ungodly said God : 'Why dost thou preach my laws, and takest my covenant in thy mouth ;

17 'Whereas thou hatest to be reformed : and hast cast my words behind thee ?

18 'When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him : and hast been partaker with the adulterers.

which have indeed been regularly presented ; that is, which have been always before me.

9. *I will take no bullock*] I do not require, I will not accept such offerings.

10. *Upon a thousand hills*] Rather, on the hills where they rove in thousands.

12. *If I be hungry, &c.*] This bold language is used for the purpose of convincing us that God, the Almighty Creator of all things, can never stand in need of man's offerings, or man's services.

13. *That I will eat bulls' flesh, &c.*] The Almighty remonstrates with his carnally-minded people for imagining that *He* could be grati-

fied with the flesh and blood of slain victims.

14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving*] The only offering acceptable to God is that of a grateful heart,—a heart devoted to his service.

16. *Why dost thou preach my laws*] "Unto the wicked, God saith," How, or with what reason, canst thou pretend to proclaim my law and speak of my covenant? See Rom. ii. 17—23.

17. *Whereas thou hatest to be reformed*] "Seeing thou hatest instruction."

18. *When thou sawest a thief*] God charges the ungodly with specific breaches of his commandments—of the seventh by adultery,

19 'Thou hast let thy mouth speak wickedness : and with thy tongue thou hast set forth deceit.

20 'Thou satest, and spakest against thy brother : yea, and hast slandered thine own mother's son.

21 'These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest wickedly, that I am even such a one as thyself : but I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done.

22 'O consider this, ye that forget God : lest I pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you.

23 'Whoso offereth Me thanks and praise, he honoureth Me : and to him that ordereth his conversation right will I shew the salvation of God.'

PSALM LI.

DAVID'S CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE.

Proper Psalm for Ash-Wednesday.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness : according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness : and cleanse me from my sin.

of the eighth by robbery, and (in the two following verses) of the ninth, by falsehood and slander.

21. *I held my tongue, &c.*] Notwithstanding thy many and grievous sins against Me, I refrained Myself, and forbore to punish.

— *Thoughtest wickedly, &c.*] Presumed to conclude from my forbearance, that I was indifferent to good or evil conduct, and took no account of human actions. Elsewhere we learn (see Rom. ii. 4, 5) that the goodness and forbearance of God towards sinners is meant to lead them to repentance.

— *But I will reprove thee, &c.*] I will convict thee of thy sins, and bring them up as accusing witnesses against thee at the fearful day of

reckoning. Well may they that 'forget God' (ver. 22) be called to consider this solemn warning.

22. *Lest I pluck you away*] "Lest I tear you in pieces."

23. *Ordereth his conversation*] Directs his conduct, or behaviour. The word 'conversation' is used in the same sense in Phil. i. 27 : 'only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.' Refer to Ps. xxxvii. 14.

Ps. LI.—The fourth Penitential Psalm, written by David to express and record the deepest penitence and contrition for his heinous sins against God, in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba. Read 2 Sam. xi. xii.

3 For I acknowledge my faults : and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight : that Thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when Thou art judged.

5 Behold, I was shapen in wickedness : and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

6 But lo, Thou requirest truth in the inward parts : and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

7 Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness : that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Turn thy face from my sins : and put out all my misdeeds.

10 Make me a clean heart, O God : and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence : and take not thy holy Spirit from me.

3. *For I acknowledge*] Verses 3 and 9 are among the sentences selected as forming a suitable introduction to the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church.

4. *Against Thee only*] David is brought to confess that though he had grievously offended men, his sin consisted most especially in his flagrant transgression of the Divine law.

— *That Thou mightest be justified in thy saying, &c.*] So that Thou art righteous in thy sentence, and clear when Thou art judged, that is, free from the imputation of injustice or undue severity.

5. *Behold, I was shapen, &c.*] Here is as distinct an acknowledgment of the taint or corruption of man's nature as any to be found in the New Testament. So Job xiv. 4, 'Who can bring a clean thing

out of an unclean? not one.'

6. *Secretly*] In the depths of the heart.

7. *Hyssop*] Hyssop is probably the caper plant, which was dipped in blood, and used to sprinkle an unclean person. Lev. xiv. 6, 7; Heb. ix. 19. The meaning, then, is, Thou shalt purify my polluted soul by thy Holy Spirit, as the Jewish priest cleansed a leper by dipping a bunch of hyssop in blood and sprinkling it over him.

— *Whiter than snow*] 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.' Isa. i. 18.

10. *Make me a clean heart, &c.*] Ezek. xxxvi. 26; Ephes. iv. 24. See Collects for Christmas-day, the feast of Purification, Ash-Wednesday, and 1st Collect in the Communion Service.

11. *Take not thy holy, &c.*] Two

12 O give me the comfort of thy help again : and stablish me with thy free Spirit.

13 Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked : and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou that art the God of my health : and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.

15 Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord : and my mouth shall shew thy praise.

16 For Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it Thee : but Thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

17 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit : a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise.

18 O be favourable and gracious unto Sion : build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations : then shall they offer young bullocks upon thine altar.

of the most beautiful of our shorter prayers (or suffrages) are taken from this and the preceding verse :—

‘O God, make clean our hearts within us.

‘And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.’

14. *Deliver me from blood-guiltiness*] The sin of murder, of which he made himself guilty by ordering Uriah ‘to be set in the forefront of the hottest battle,’ that he might be ‘smitten and die.’ 2 Sam. xi. 15.

— *Thou that art the God of my health*] “Thou God of my salvation.”

15. *Thou shalt open my lips, &c.*] This verse furnishes the two short petitions at the beginning of Morning Prayer :—

‘O Lord, open Thou our lips,’ &c.

16. *For Thou desirest no sacrifice*] ‘And Samuel said, Hath

the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.’ 1 Sam. xv. 22.

18. *O be favourable*] From heart-felt and humble prayer for pardon David turns to implore God’s blessing upon the city and people of Jerusalem. He foretells the restoration of true and acceptable sacrifices; offered in faith, and with a thankful spirit; sacrifices, therefore, altogether unlike the mere formal and heartless ones which are condemned in this and the preceding Psalm. The words may probably contain a prophetic allusion to the perfect and acceptable sacrifice of Christ. Refer to Ps. xl. 8—10.

19. *Young bullocks*] The finest and choicest animals for sacrifice.

PSALM LII.

THE SLANDERER REQUIRED.

WHY boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant : that thou canst do mischief ;

2 Whereas the goodness of God : endureth yet daily ?

3 Thy tongue imagineth wickedness : and with lies thou cuttest like a sharp razor.

4 Thou hast loved unrighteousness more than goodness : and to talk of lies more than righteousness.

5 Thou hast loved to speak all words that may do hurt : O thou false tongue.

6 Therefore shall God destroy thee for ever : He shall take thee, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling, and root thee out of the land of the living.

7 The righteous also shall see this, and fear : and shall laugh him to scorn ;

8 'Lo, this is the man that took not God for his strength : but trusted unto the multitude of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.'

9 As for me, I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God : my trust is in the tender mercy of God for ever and ever.

10 I will always give thanks unto Thee for that Thou hast done : and I will hope in thy Name, for thy saints like it well.

Ps. LII. is entitled in the Bible Version, "A Psalm of David when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech." It seems to have been suggested by the treacherous slaughter of the priests at Nob by Doeg, the chief of the herdsmen, at Saul's command. Read 1 Sam. xxii.

1. *Canst do mischief*] This verse is translated in the Bible, "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man?"

2. *Whereas the goodness of God, &c.*] The providential care and protection of God, continued to his servants day after day, are contrasted with the malice and violence of wicked men.

3. *Thy tongue imagineth wickedness*] "Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs."

9. *A green olive-tree*] An Evergreen flourishing and fruitful, and so an emblem of a man who is blessed and favoured by God.

10. *And I will hope in thy*

Evening.]

PSALM LIII.

[Day 10.

THE MORAL DEPRAVITY OF UNBELIEVERS.

THE foolish body hath said in his heart : There is no God.

2 Corrupt are they, and become abominable in their wickedness : there is none that doeth good.

3 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men : to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God.

4 But they are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become abominable : there is also none that doeth good, no not one.

5 Are not they without understanding that work wickedness : eating up my people as if they would eat bread ? they have not called upon God.

6 They were afraid where no fear was : for God hath broken the bones of him that besieged thee ; thou hast put them to confusion, because God hath despised them.

7 Oh, that the salvation were given unto Israel out of Sion : Oh, that the Lord would deliver his people out of captivity !

8 Then should Jacob rejoice : and Israel should be right glad.

Name, &c.] “And I will wait on thy Name, for it is good before thy saints.”

Ps. LIII. is, with a few variations, a repetition of Ps. XIV. to which refer for the notes.

1. *The foolish body*] The wicked man, who is without understanding.

2. *Corrupt are they*] This and the two following verses are quoted by St. Paul, Rom. iii. 10—12, to strengthen his argument that both Jew and Gentile are alike con-

demned by the Law.

5. *Without understanding*] ‘My people is foolish, they have not known me ; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding ; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.’ Jer. iv. 22.

6. *God hath broken the bones, &c.*] “God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee.” The meaning is, God has cast down and destroyed thine enemies.

PSALM LIV.

GOD THE HELPER OF THE OPPRESSED.

Proper Psalm for Good Friday.

SAVE me, O God, for thy Name's sake : and avenge me in thy strength.

2 Hear my prayer, O God : and hearken unto the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers are risen up against me : and tyrants, which have not God before their eyes, seek after my soul.

4 Behold, God is my helper : the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.

5 He shall reward evil unto mine enemies : destroy Thou them in thy truth.

6 An offering of a free heart will I give Thee, and praise thy Name, O Lord : because it is so comfortable.

7 For He hath delivered me out of all my trouble : and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

PSALM LV.

THE TREACHEROUS FRIEND.

HEAR my prayer, O God : and hide not thyself from my petition.

Ps. LIV.—A Psalm of David on occasion of the Ziphites betraying his place of concealment to Saul. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14—29.

1. *Avenge me*] Take up my cause.

3. *Seek after my soul*] Aim at taking away my life.

5. *In thy truth*] Agreeably to the promises made unto thy servants.

6. *Because it is so comfortable*] Or, "For it is good." To remember the Name of the Lord, who had wrought such great deliverances for his fathers, must have been the great consolation of the pious Israelite when suffering trouble or

persecution. To Christians the Holy Spirit has been revealed and sent, under the name of 'Comforter.'

7. *His desire*] *Its* desire. David's wish to see the overthrow of his enemies, was, because they were enemies of God, and rebels against his holy laws.

Ps. LV. was written, doubtless, on some occasion of great distress and danger, but whether during the persecution of Saul, or the conspiracy of Absalom and Ahithophel, is uncertain.

2 Take heed unto me, and hear me : how I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed.

3 The enemy crieth so, and the ungodly cometh on so fast : for they are minded to do me some mischief ; so maliciously are they set against me.

4 My heart is disquieted within me : and the fear of death is fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me : and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.

6 And I said, 'O that I had wings like a dove : for then would I flee away, and be at rest.

7 'Lo, then would I get me away far off : and remain in the wilderness.

8 'I would make haste to escape : because of the stormy wind and tempest.'

9 Destroy their tongues, O Lord, and divide them : for I have spied unrighteousness and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about within the walls thereof : mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.

11 Wickedness is therein : deceit and guile go not out of their streets.

12 For it is not an open enemy, that hath done me this dishonour : for then I could have borne it.

2. *How I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed*] Another translation renders the verse, 'I give free course to my sorrow, and cry aloud.'

3. *The enemy crieth so, &c.*] "Because of the voice of the enemy; because of the oppression of the wicked; for they cast iniquity (that is, abuse and slander) upon me, and in wrath they hate (*i.e.* persecute) me."

8. *Because of the stormy wind, &c.*] Rather, perhaps, *From* the stormy wind and tempest; that is, from the fury and violence of my enemies.

9. *Destroy their tongues, O Lord, and divide them*] That is, Divide

and distract their counsels, as at the building of Babel. 'O Lord, I pray Thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.' 2 Sam. xv. 32.

10. *They go about*] To picture in the most forcible way the utter disorder and miserable divisions of Jerusalem, unrighteousness and strife are, by a strong figure, represented as sentinels going their rounds upon the walls of the city, while 'mischief and sorrow,' treachery and wickedness, do their work within.

12—15. *For it is not an open enemy, &c.*] The description suits the many aggravating circumstances

13 Neither was it mine adversary, that did magnify himself against me : for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him.

14 But it was even thou, my companion : my guide, and mine own familiar friend.

15 We took sweet counsel together : and walked in the house of God as friends.

16 Let death come hastily upon them, and let them go down quick into hell : for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

17 As for me, I will call upon God : and the Lord shall save me.

18 In the evening, and morning, and at noon-day will I pray, and that instantly : and He shall hear my voice.

19 It is He that hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me : for there were many with me.

20 Yea, even God, that endureth for ever, shall hear me, and bring them down : for they will not turn, nor fear God.

21 He laid his hands upon such as be at peace with him : and he brake his covenant.

22 The words of his mouth were softer than butter, having war in his heart : his words were smoother than oil, and yet be they very swords.

23 O cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall

of Ahithophel's treason against David, and that of Judas against his Divine Master.

13. *Peradventure*] Perhaps.

16. *Let them go down quick into hell*] Let them be swallowed up alive in the grave, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Num. xvi. 23—34; Ps. cvi. 17. The reader may be reminded of the sudden and awful end of Ahithophel, who conspired against David (2 Sam. xvii. 23), and of Judas, who betrayed Christ (Matt. xxvii. 5).

18. *Instantly*] Earnestly, strongly urging my petitions. Luke vii. 4; Rom. xii. 12.

19. *There were many with me*] That is, many contending with me, many adversaries.

20. *Will not turn*] Will not alter their course, and turn from their evil ways.

21. *He*] David's treacherous friend. This and the next verse seem very exactly to apply to the conduct of Judas Iscariot.

23. *O cast thy burden upon the*

nourish Thee : and shall not suffer the righteous to fall for ever.

24 And as for them : Thou, O God, shalt bring them into the pit of destruction.

25 The blood-thirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days : nevertheless, my trust shall be in Thee, O Lord.

Morning.

PSALM LVI.

[*Day 11.*]

TRUST IN GOD WHILE SURROUNDED BY ENEMIES.

BE merciful unto me, O God, for man goeth about to devour me : he is daily fighting, and troubling me.

2 Mine enemies are daily in hand to swallow me up : for they be many that fight against me, O Thou most Highest.

3 Nevertheless, though I am sometime afraid : yet put I my trust in Thee.

4 I will praise God, because of his word : I have put my trust in God, and will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

Lord, &c.] The pious conclusion of the Psalmist is this, that whatever dangers or troubles beset us, we should put our trust in God for safety and deliverance.

23. *Shall nourish thee, &c.*] "Shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

24. *And as for them*] That is, my malicious enemies, who are also the enemies of God.

25. *Nevertheless, my trust*] "But I will trust in Thee."

Ps. LVI. is ascribed in the Bible to "David, when the Philistines took him in Gath." See 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15. The Psalmist complains of the treacherous attempts

of his enemies to destroy him; appeals to God, who knows his distress; expresses his full trust in Him; and, finally, praises God for having delivered him from danger and death.

2. *Are daily in hand, &c.*] Are ever eager to destroy me.

3. *Nevertheless, though I am sometime afraid*] 'When I am afraid,' that is, in the day of danger, 'then trust I in Thee.'

4. *What flesh can do unto me*] The same expression occurs again at ver. 11. The meaning is, Relying the fullest trust in the protection of God, I will not fear the utmost power of man.

5 They daily mistake my words : all that they imagine is to do me evil.

6 They hold all together, and keep themselves close : and mark my steps, when they lay wait for my soul.

7 Shall they escape for their wickedness : Thou, O God, in thy displeasure shalt cast them down.

8 Thou tellest my fittings ; put my tears into thy bottle : are not these things noted in thy book ?

9 Whensoever I call upon Thee, then shall mine enemies be put to flight : this I know, for God is on my side.

10 In God's word will I rejoice : in the Lord's word will I comfort me.

11 Yea, in God have I put my trust : I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 Unto Thee, O God, will I pay my vows : unto Thee will I give thanks.

13 For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling : that I may walk before God in the light of the living.

PSALM LVII.

FOR DELIVERANCE FROM PERSECUTION.

Proper Psalm for Easter Day.

BE merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in Thee : and under the

5. *They daily mistake my words*] "Every day they wrest (i.e. pervert) my words."

6. *Keep themselves close*] Conceal themselves and their movements.

— *Lay wait for my soul*] Lay snares for my life.

7. *Shall they escape, &c.*] Shall their iniquity go unpunished? or, perhaps, it means, They trust to their wickedness—that is, their crafty and secret devices—for deliverance and impunity.

8. *Thou tellest my fittings*] Thou

numberest my wanderings from place to place.

8. *Put my tears into thy bottle, &c.*] Let my tears be regarded as the precious liquors which are carefully preserved in flasks: in other words, let my sorrows and afflictions be ever had in remembrance before Thee, O Lord. 'Are they not,' he asks, using another figure, *noted in thy book?*' that is, reckoned up, and recorded.

Ps. LVII. was written by David on occasion of his escape from Saul.

shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, until this tyranny be over-past.

2 I will call unto the most high God : even unto the God that shall perform the cause which I have in hand.

3 He shall send from heaven : and save me from the reproof of him that would eat me up.

4 God shall send forth his mercy and truth : my soul is among lions.

5 And I lie even among the children of men, that are set on fire : whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

6 Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens : and thy glory above all the earth.

7 They have laid a net for my feet, and pressed down my soul : they have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves.

8 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed : I will sing, and give praise.

9 Awake up, my glory ; awake, lute and harp : I myself will awake right early.

10 I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the people : and I will sing unto Thee among the nations.

in the cave of En-gedi. 1 Sam. xxiv. 3. The latter part contains an expression of steadfast trust in God, with an ascription of grateful praise to Him for his mercy and truth.

1. *This tyranny*] This persecution and oppression.

2. *That shall perform, &c.*] Who accomplisheth my purpose and bringeth all things to a good end for me.

3. *He shall send, &c.*] This verse is more clearly rendered,—He shall send from Heaven and save me, putting shame and reproach upon my persecutor.

4. *My soul is among lions*] I am surrounded by powerful and cruel

enemies, from whom my life is in peril. Ps. xxii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 32. This clause is more properly made part of the next verse in the Bible Version.

5. *Set on fire*] Enemies breathing flame; and so cruel and ferocious that their teeth are compared to spears and arrows; and their tongue to a sharp sword. Prov. xxx. 14; Acts ix. 1. See also especially James iii. 6.

7. *And pressed down my soul*] "My soul is bowed down."

8. *My heart is fixed, &c.*] Steadfast and immovable in its confidence of divine support.

9—12.] The deliverance of David from the hand of Saul, is regarded

11 For the greatness of thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens : and thy truth unto the clouds.

12 Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens : and thy glory above all the earth.

PSALM LVIII.

DENUNCIATION OF UNJUST RULERS AND JUDGES.

ARE your minds set upon righteousness, O ye congregation : and do ye judge the thing that is right, O ye sons of men ?

2 Yea, ye imagine mischief in your heart upon the earth : and your hands deal with wickedness.

3 The ungodly are froward, even from their mother's womb : as soon as they are born, they go astray, and speak lies.

4 They are as venomous as the poison of a serpent : even like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears ;

5 Which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer : charm he never so wisely.

by the Church as a type of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave ; and, therefore, this Song of Praise is appointed to be sung on Easter Day.

Ps. LVIII. refers probably to the period of the persecution of David by Saul. It is, at all events, the stern remonstrance of some injured person against the malice of corrupt judges, and a prayer for their overthrow ; at which good men will rejoice, from seeing in it another proof of the truth and righteousness of the God of all the earth.

1. *Are your minds, &c.*] "Do ye indeed speak righteousness;" that is, pronounce righteous judgment ?

— *O ye congregation*] Ye coun-

cil, or assembly of judges.

3. *Froward*] From-ward ; that is, averse from, or perverse. *Froward* is the opposite of *toward*. It occurs five times in the Psalms :— xviii. 26 ; xlv. 18 ; lxiv. 2 ; ci. 5. The Bib. Ver. is "estranged." See Ephes. iv. 18 ; Col. i. 21.

4. *Like the deaf adder, &c.*] As insensible to reason and truth as certain venomous serpents to the voice and music of the most skilful charmer. The serpent-charmer is, up to the present time, a character well known in the East. His art is to soothe and fascinate the serpent by means of musical sounds ; and any serpent which should be regarded as peculiarly malignant. See Jer. viii. 17 ; Eccles. x. 11.

6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths ; smite the jaw-bones of the lions, O Lord : let them fall away like water that runneth apace ; and when they shoot their arrows let them be rooted out.

7 Let them consume away like a snail, and be like the untimely fruit of a woman : and let them not see the sun.

8 Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns : so let indignation vex him, even as a thing that is raw.

9 The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance : he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly.

10 So that a man shall say, 'Verily there is a reward for the righteous : doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth.'

6. *Smite the jaw-bones of the lions*] To break the jaws of the lion is to destroy his power of mischief : and David under this image prays God to beat down the power of his oppressors. See Ps. iii. 7.

— *And when they shoot their arrows, &c.*] Let them (the arrows) be as though they were pointless.

7. *Like a snail, &c.*] As the snail, which leaves its slime, a part of itself, in its course, and so wastes away as it goes.

— *Let them not see the sun*] The meaning is, Let them be as an abortion, which passes away without seeing the light.

8. *Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns, &c.*] *Or ever* is the same as *ere ever*, i. e. *before*. The meaning is probably,—Before your kettles are heated by the thorns blazing beneath, or the flesh within them has become sodden (that is, suddenly, and in an instant), the Lord in his fierce anger shall sweep off the wicked, before they have time to accomplish their designs. It

may be well to give also the following well supported translation of this difficult verse :—Before your pots feel the fire, may a tempest scatter the thorns—the green and the dry (or the flesh, both raw and sodden).

9. *The righteous shall rejoice*] The servant of God will see with satisfaction the triumph of God over his enemies.

— *His footsteps*] Rather, as in Bib. Ver., "his feet." He shall be as the conqueror who, after a victory, marches in triumph over the battle-field, which is drenched with the blood of the vanquished.

10. *So that a man shall say, &c.*] The reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, are the modes by which God displays His just government of the world. Such recompense was awarded in this life under the Jewish law ; but under the Christian dispensation it is reserved for a future state. See 2 Cor. v. 10.

Evening.]

PSALM LIX.

[Day 11.]

FOR DELIVERANCE FROM TREACHEROUS ENEMIES.

DELIVER me from mine enemies, O God : defend me from them that rise up against me.

2 O deliver me from the wicked doers : and save me from the blood-thirsty men.

3 For lo, they lie waiting for my soul : the mighty men are gathered against me, without any offence or fault of me, O Lord.

4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault : arise Thou therefore to help me, and behold.

5 Stand up, O Lord God of hosts, Thou God of Israel, to visit all the heathen : and be not merciful unto them that offend of malicious wickedness.

6 They go to and fro in the evening : they grin like a dog, and run about through the city.

7 Behold, they speak with their mouth, and swords are in their lips : for who doth hear ?

8 But Thou, O Lord, shalt have them in derision : and Thou shalt laugh all the heathen to scorn.

9 My strength will I ascribe unto Thee : for Thou art the God of my refuge.

10 God sheweth me his goodness plenteously : and God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.

Ps. LIX.—A prayer of David when Saul sent officers to watch his house and slay him. From this dangerous situation he was delivered by the contrivance of his wife Michal. 1 Sam. xix. 11. In the Psalm he invokes the judgment of God against the enemies who were thirsting for his blood, and expresses his own full confidence in God's mercy.

4. *They run and prepare themselves, &c.* They make themselves ready to attack me, without any offence or provocation on my part.

— *And behold* Look upon my danger and distress.

5. *To visit all the heathen* To judge and punish the nations.

6. *They go to and fro in the evening, &c.* The enemies of David hunted him like hounds. They return in the evening disappointed of their prey, and run howling through the city, like wild dogs who have sought in vain all day for food.

7. *Behold, they speak with their mouth, &c.* Behold, they pour forth evil with their mouths ; swords are within their lips ; for (they say) ' who heareth ? ' Prov. xv. 28.

9. *My strength I will ascribe, &c.* Or better,—O my strength, upon Thee will I wait.

11 Slay them not, lest my people forget it : but scatter them abroad among the people, and put them down, O Lord, our defence.

12 For the sin of their mouth, and for the words of their lips, they shall be taken in their pride : and why ? their preaching is of cursing and lies.

13 Consume them in thy wrath, consume them, that they may perish : and know that it is God that ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the world.

14 And in the evening they will return : grin like a dog, and will go about the city.

15 They will run here and there for meat : and grudge if they be not satisfied.

16 As for me, I will sing of thy power, and will praise thy mercy betimes in the morning : for Thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto Thee, O my strength, will I sing : for Thou, O God, art my refuge, and my merciful God.

PSALM LX.

DAVID'S TRIUMPH OVER HIS ENEMIES.

O GOD, Thou hast cast us out, and scattered us abroad : Thou hast also been displeased ; O turn Thee unto us again.

11. *Slay them not, lest, &c.*] Destroy them not utterly, lest the wholesome lesson be soon forgotten, but condemn them to wander about the world, living examples to all people of thy righteous judgment upon the wicked and rebellious. How singularly applicable is this verse to the fate of the Jewish people, who for nearly 2,000 years have been scattered over the face of the whole earth !

12. *And why ? their preaching, &c.*] Even because of the curses and falsehood which they utter.

13. *And know*] And that men may know.

14. *Grin like a dog*] More pro-

perly, snarl and growl as a dog does for hunger.

14, 15.] David in these verses has again recourse to the same image which he used before (v. 6), of hungry dogs disappointed of their prey, to describe the blood-thirsty men who sought after his life.

15. *Grudge.*] Growl out their discontent.

Ps. LX. describes, in characteristic language, and by sundry appropriate images, the submission of the tribes of Israel to king David, and the subjection of the neighbouring heathen. 2 Sam. v.—viii.

Compare Ps. cviii.

1. *O God, Thou hast cast us out*]

2 Thou hast moved the land, and divided it : heal the sores thereof, for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast shewed thy people heavy things : Thou hast given us a drink of deadly wine.

4 Thou hast given a token for such as fear Thee : that they may triumph because of the truth.

5 Therefore were thy beloved delivered : help me with thy right hand, and hear me.

6 God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice, and divide Sichem : and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead is mine, and Manasses is mine : Ephraim also is the strength of my head ; Judah is my law-giver ;

8 Moab is my wash-pot ; over Edom will I cast out my shoe : Philistia, be thou glad of me.

In verses 1—3 reference is made to the past calamities and disasters of the people. Refer to 1 Sam. xxxi.

2. *Thou hast moved the land, &c.*] Compare Isa. i. 5—7.

3. *A drink of deadly wine*] ‘The cup of trembling.’ Isa. li. 22. Thou hast stunned, and as it were intoxicated, the nation by thy heavy judgments.

4. *Thou hast given a token, &c.*] Thou hast given a banner or ensign to them that fear Thee; the ensign of David to which they might rally. See Isa. xi. 10.

— *Because of the truth*] According to thy true promise.

5. *Therefore were thy beloved delivered*] Rather, That thy beloved people may be delivered.

6. *God hath spoken in his holiness*] Hath spoken as the Holy One; hath sworn by Himself. Ps. lxxxix. 34; Heb. vi. 13.

— *I will rejoice*] on account of God’s solemn promise and decree, and in dependence upon them, I will proceed to apportion out the land which He has given as an inheritance to his people. See Gen. xlix.; Deut. xxxiii.

— *Mete out*] Measure out into

portions.

6, 7. *Sichem, &c.*] *Sichem* (or *Shechem*) and *Manasseh*, may be taken to represent the western side of Canaan, *Succoth* and *Gilead* the eastern. Gen. xxx. 17, 18.

7. *Gilead is mine*] Gilead comprised the territory assigned to the tribes of Reuben and Gad.

— *Ephraim also is the strength of my head*] Ephraim, a powerful and warlike tribe to the north of Jerusalem, is the fortress which guards and protects me.

— *Judah is my law-giver*] Judah contained the capital which was the seat of government and law. See Gen. xlix. 10.

8. *Moab is my wash-pot*] Moab, a country to the east of the Jordan, was reduced to the most ignominious bondage, and employed for the basest uses. See 2 Sam. viii. 2.

— *Over Edom will I cast out my shoe*] As to a slave of low degree, whose office it is to clean and carry the shoes of his master. Refer to Matt. iii. 11. Edom, or Idumæa (called also Mount Seir), was situated to the south-east of the Holy Land.

— *Philistia, be thou glad of me*]

9 Who will lead me into the strong city : who will bring me into Edom ?

10 Hast not Thou cast us out, O God : wilt not Thou, O God, go out with our hosts ?

11 O be Thou our help in trouble : for vain is the help of man.

12 Through God will we do great acts : for it is He that shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM LXI.

PRAYER OF DAVID IN EXILE.

HEAR my crying, O God : give ear unto my prayer.
2 From the ends of the earth will I call upon Thee : when my heart is in heaviness ;

3 O set me up upon the rock that is higher than I : for Thou hast been my hope, and a strong tower for me against the enemy.

4 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever : and my trust shall be under the covering of thy wings.

5 For Thou, O Lord, hast heard my desires : and hast given an heritage unto those that fear thy Name.

That is, hail me with acclamations as a conqueror.

9. *The strong city*] Petra, the capital of Edom or Idumæa, a city which was actually built in the rock and deemed impregnable. It is referred to in Obad. 3.

10. *Hast not Thou, &c.*] The Bible Version gives a more distinct meaning, and to the question, "Who will bring me into the strong city?" answers by another, "Wilt not Thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and Thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?"

Ps. LXI. was composed by David during his exile from Judæa in consequence of Absalom's rebellion. See 2 Sam. xv. 23. He expresses

his full confidence that the Lord will bring him back.

2. *From the ends of the earth, &c.*] We may suppose David to have sent up this sorrowful prayer from the wilderness beyond Jordan, whither he had fled from his rebellious son. 2 Sam. xv. 28. However far he may be banished from his home, or from his church, the exile has the comfort of knowing that his prayer, if offered in faith, will be heard of God.

3. *The rock that is higher than I*] The secure fortress, which is too high for me to mount by my own strength; the allusion may be, perhaps, to Mount Sion. See Matt. vii. 24; 1 Cor. x. 4.

5. *Hast given an heritage*] "Hast given me the heritage of those that

6 Thou shalt grant the King a long life : that his years may endure throughout all generations.

7 He shall dwell before God for ever : O prepare thy loving mercy and faithfulness, that they may preserve him.

8 So will I alway sing praise unto thy Name : that I may daily perform my vows.

Morning.]

PSALM LXII.

Day 12.

TRUST IN GOD AND IN NONE BESIDE.

MY soul truly waiteth still upon God : for of Him cometh my salvation.

2 He verily is my strength and my salvation : He is my defence, so that I shall not greatly fall.

3 How long will ye imagine mischief against every man : ye shall be slain all the sort of you ; yea, as a tottering wall shall ye be, and like a broken hedge.

4 Their device is only how to put him out whom God will exalt : their delight is in lies ; they give good words with their mouth, but curse with their heart.

fear thy Name," that is, hast given me possession of the inheritance promised to thy people Israel.

6. *A long life, &c.*] Even while a fugitive from his dominions, and in danger from his enemies, David trusted in God's promise to him, of a long and prosperous life ; but in speaking of himself he is made to prophesy of Christ, the true King of Israel, of whom it was foretold by the angel Gabriel, 'The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his father David ; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Luke i. 32, 33. See also Rev. xi. 15.

8. *My vows*] The offerings of praise and thanksgiving which I promised when in exile.

Ps. LXII.—'A Psalm of David,' written probably during the time of Absalom's rebellion. It is well adapted to sustain the confidence of God's people in his support and protection amid troubles and dangers.

1. *My soul truly waiteth still, &c.*] The full meaning is, My soul in silence waits upon God only.

3. *Against every man*] Rather, as in the Bible Version, "against a man." David here remonstrates with his enemies for their treacherous and unprovoked attacks upon himself.

— *Ye shall be slain*] Rather, Will ye all seek to slay him (David) when he is but as a bulging wall, or fence of loose stones ?

4. *How to put him out, &c.*]

5 Nevertheless, my soul, wait thou still upon God : for my hope is in Him.

6 He truly is my strength and my salvation : He is my defence, so that I shall not fall.

7 In God is my health, and my glory : the rock of my might, and in God is my trust.

8 O put your trust in Him alway, ye people : pour out your hearts before Him, for God is our hope.

9 As for the children of men, they are but vanity : the children of men are deceitful upon the weights, they are altogether lighter than vanity itself.

10 O trust not in wrong and robbery, give not yourselves unto vanity : if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

11 God spake once, and twice I have also heard the same : that power belongeth unto God ;

12 And that Thou, Lord, art merciful : for Thou rewardest every man according to his work.

PSALM LXIII.

LONGING DESIRE FOR GOD AND HIS GRACE.

O GOD, Thou art my God : early will I seek Thee.

"They only consult to cast him down from his excellency" or high place.

5. *Wait thou still*] That is, (as before in ver. 1) wait patiently and silently. Compare Ps. iv. 4.

7. *My health*] "My salvation."

8. *For God is our hope*] "God is a refuge for us."

9. *As for the children of men*] "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie."

Deceitful upon the weights] Found hollow and deficient when they come to be weighed in the balance. See Dan. v. 27.

11. *God spake once, and twice I have, &c.*] That is, once and again

hath God declared that power and might belong to Him alone. The same expression occurs in Job xxxiii. 14.

12. *That Thou, Lord, art merciful*] The clearer version of the Bible is, "Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for Thou renderest to every man according to his work." After recording God's assertion of his own Almighty power, the Psalmist ascribes to Him the other great attribute of mercy, in that He richly rewards his true servants, while He visits his enemies with the judgment which they provoke. Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6.

Ps. LXIII.—We learn from the

2 My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh also longeth after Thee : in a barren and dry land where no water is.

3 Thus have I looked for Thee in holiness : that I might behold thy power and glory.

4 For thy loving-kindness is better than the life itself : my lips shall praise Thee.

5 As long as I live will I magnify Thee on this manner : and lift up my hands in thy Name.

6 My soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness : when my mouth praiseth Thee with joyful lips.

7 Have I not remembered Thee in my bed : and thought upon Thee when I was waking ?

8 Because Thou hast been my helper : therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

9 My soul hangeth upon Thee : thy right hand hath upholden me.

10 These also that seek the hurt of my soul : they shall go under the earth.

11 Let them fall upon the edge of the sword : that they may be a portion for foxes.

12 But the King shall rejoice in God ; all they also

title in the Bible, that this is "A Psalm of David in the wilderness of Judah." The country referred to lies along the east side of the tribe of Judah, where David remained a short time during his flight from Absalom. See 2 Sam. xv. 28 ; xvii. 2.

1. *Early will I seek Thee*] This Psalm was anciently used as a Morning Hymn.

3. *Thus have I looked, &c.*] "To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary."

4. *Better than the life itself, &c.*] Precious as life is, thy goodness and mercy are nearer still ; for without them we can have no happiness in this life, and no hope of the life eternal.

6. *When my mouth praiseth*]

"And my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips."

7. *Have I not remembered*] "When I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night-watches."

10. *These also, &c.*] The meaning is,—But those that seek to destroy me shall be brought down to the grave.

11. *Let them*] "*They shall fall by the sword ; they shall be a portion for foxes ;*" that is, their bodies shall remain unburied, and become the prey of jackals and other wild beasts. See the account of the destruction of Absalom's army, 2 Sam. xviii. 6—8.

12. *All they also that swear by Him, &c.*] All that swear by the name of God, as his servants. Com-

that swear by Him shall be commended : for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

PSALM LXIV.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION.

HEAR my voice, O God, in my prayer : preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the gathering together of the forward : and from the insurrection of wicked doers ;

3 Who have whet their tongue like a sword : and shoot out their arrows, even bitter words ;

4 That they may privily shoot at him that is perfect : suddenly do they hit him, and fear not.

5 They encourage themselves in mischief : and commune among themselves how they may lay snares, and say, that no man shall see them.

6 They imagine wickedness, and practise it : that they keep secret among themselves, every man in the deep of his heart.

7 But God shall suddenly shoot at them with a swift arrow : that they shall be wounded.

8 Yea, their own tongues shall make them fall : inso-much that whoso seeth them shall laugh them to scorn.

9 And all men that see it shall say, ' This hath God done ' : for they shall perceive that it is his work.

pare Deut. vi. 13. Some, however, consider the words to mean, all who bear true allegiance to the king.

12. *Them that speak lies*] Rebels are called liars, as being false to their king.

Ps. LXIV.—A Psalm of David, composed probably at a time when he was exposed to the persecution and slanders of Saul and his followers.

4. *Him that is perfect*] The innocent man, God's true and faithful servant.

4. *Suddenly do they hit him, and fear not*] They smite him unawares while he is not suspecting any harm, for they have no fear of God before their eyes.

5. *And say, that no man shall see them*] They say, ' Who seeth us ? '

6. *They imagine wickedness, and practise it*] They devise and bring to perfection wicked plots.

— *That they keep secret, &c.*] *i.e.* their wicked plot—their secret thoughts are deep.

7. *God shall suddenly shoot at them*] God, in just retribution,

10 The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, and put his trust in Him : and all they that are true of heart shall be glad.

Evening.

PSALM LXV.

[*Day 12.*]

THANKSGIVING FOR THE FRUITFULNESS OF THE EARTH.

THOU, O God, art praised in Sion : and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.

2 Thou that hearest the prayer : unto Thee shall all flesh come.

3 My misdeeds prevail against me : O be Thou merciful unto our sins.

4 Blessed is the man, whom Thou choosest, and receivest unto Thee : he shall dwell in thy court, and shall be satisfied with the pleasures of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

5 Thou shalt shew us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation : Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea.

shall suddenly smite those who were aiming at others, ver. 4.

Ps. LXV. bears the character of a national thanksgiving for spiritual and temporal blessings. The bounty of God, as manifested by the fruits of the earth, is specially commemorated ; and the Psalm, therefore, may suitably be used as a Hymn at the time of Harvest.

1. *The vow*] The offering of sacrifice or praise, which we promised to make to God, when we should be delivered by Him out of danger or distress.

2. *Unto Thee shall all flesh come*] To God, who alone heareth and can answer prayer, all men shall come. His ears are open to the supplica-

tions of all in every country who cry unto Him for help.

3. *My misdeeds, &c.*] The sense of my many and grievous sins overwhelms and confounds me ; without God's mercy I am lost.

4. *Blessed is the man, &c.*] The Bible Version is, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest and causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in thy courts : we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."

5. *Wonderful things*] Miraculous proofs of Thy power, the 'signs and wonders' of the N. T. John iv. 48. — *That remain in the broad sea*] Those who inhabit the islands and shores of the most distant seas.

6 Who in his strength setteth fast the mountains : and is girded about with power.

7 Who stilleth the raging of the sea : and the noise of his waves, and the madness of the people.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth shall be afraid at thy tokens : Thou that makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise Thee.

9 Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it : Thou makest it very plenteous.

10 The river of God is full of water : Thou preparest their corn, for so Thou providest for the earth.

11 Thou waterest her furrows, Thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof : Thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it.

12 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness : and thy clouds drop fatness.

13 They shall drop upon the dwellings of the wilderness : and the little hills shall rejoice on every side.

14 The folds shall be full of sheep : the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing.

7. *Who stilleth the raging, &c.*] The same sovereign power of stilling alike the fury of the tempest and the madness of the people, is ascribed to Jehovah in Isa. xvii. 12.

8. *Afraid at thy tokens*] Alarmed at the astonishing exhibitions of thy power. See 2 Sam. vii. 23.

— *The outgoings of the morning, &c.*] The regions where the sun appears to rise and set; that is, the east and the west.

9. *Blessest*] “Waterest.”

10. *The river of God is full of water*] The streams of eastern countries are often dry in summer, but God’s river, the rain from heaven, never fails. ‘The land whither ye go to possess it, is

a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.’ Deut. xi. 11.

11. *Thou sendest rain, &c.*] Compare Job xxxviii. 26, 27.

12. *Thou crownest the year, &c.*] It is to God’s goodness that we owe the blessings of the circling seasons and the fruits of the harvest. He it is that sendeth the rain, and causeth the earth to ‘bring forth her increase.’ Ps. lxxvii. 6.

13. *The dwellings*] Rather, “The pastures of the wilderness.”

14. *The folds shall be full of sheep*] Or, according to the more exact translation of the Bible, “The pastures are clothed with flocks.”

PSALM LXVI.

PAST AND PRESENT MERCIES.

For Thanksgiving after a Storm at Sea.

O BE joyful in God, all ye lands : sing praises unto the honour of his Name, make his praise to be glorious.

2 Say unto God, 'O how wonderful art Thou in thy works : through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies be found liars unto Thee.

3 'For all the world shall worship Thee : sing of Thee, and praise thy Name.'

4 O come hither, and behold the works of God : how wonderful He is in his doing toward the children of men.

5 He turned the sea into dry land : so that they went through the water on foot ; there did we rejoice thereof.

6 He ruleth with his power for ever ; his eyes behold the people : and such as will not believe shall not be able to exalt themselves.

7 O praise our God, ye people : and make the voice of his praise to be heard ;

8 Who holdeth our soul in life : and suffereth not our feet to slip.

9 For Thou, O God, hast proved us : Thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried.

Ps. LXVI. seems to have been written as a Song of Thanksgiving for some national mercy or deliverance ; and to have been used in the Temple service.

2. *Be found liars unto Thee*] Make a show of submission unto Thee,—as no longer daring to oppose Thee openly. Ps. xviii. 45.

5. *He turned the sea into dry land*] The exertion of God's power in behalf of his people is illustrated by the passage of the Red Sea and that of the river Jordan. Exod. xiv. 21 ; Joshua iv. 23.

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5. *There did we rejoice thereof*] "There did we [as a nation] rejoice in Him."

6. *And such as will not believe, &c.*] "Let not the rebellious exalt themselves."

8—12.] The long and severe trials of the nation, terminating in a national deliverance, are here referred to.

8. *Who holdeth our soul in life*] Who hath preserved us alive.

9. *Thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried*] Thou hast tried and proved our fidelity by the fire

12

10 Thou broughtest us into the snare : and laidest trouble upon our loins.

11 Thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads : we went through fire and water, and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

12 I will go into thine house with burnt-offerings : and will pay Thee my vows, which I promised with my lips, and spake with my mouth, when I was in trouble.

13 I will offer unto Thee fat burnt-sacrifices, with the incense of rams : I will offer bullocks and goats.

14 O come hither, and hearken, all ye that fear God : and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul.

15 I called unto Him with my mouth : and gave Him praises with my tongue.

16 If I incline unto wickedness with mine heart : the Lord will not hear me.

17 But God hath heard me : and considered the voice of my prayer.

18 Praised be God who hath not cast out my prayer : nor turned his mercy from me.

PSALM LXVII.

FOR THE SPREAD OF GOD'S TRUTH AMONG ALL NATIONS.

GOD be merciful unto us, and bless us : and shew us the light of his countenance, and be merciful unto us ;

of affliction, as silver is refined by the application of intense and continuous heat. Isa. xlviii. 10.

10. *Into the snare*] As hunted animals are driven into the net.

11. *To ride over our heads*] As riders mount upon the backs of horses, and hold them in subjection. Compare Isa. li. 23.

— *We went through fire and water*] Proverbial expressions for the extremity of difficulty and danger. Isa. xliii. 2.

— *A wealthy place*] A land of plenty.

12. *Will pay Thee my vows, &c.*] The readiness and zeal of the Psalmist to offer in prosperity the burnt-offerings and sacrifices which he had vowed to God in danger and distress, teach Christians of all times the duty of steadfastly keeping, when restored to health, the resolutions of a stricter observance of God's laws and ordinances which they had made in sickness.

Ps. LXVII. is a prayer that God will so manifest his favour and goodness towards his own chosen

2 That thy way may be known upon earth : thy saving health among all nations.

3 Let the people praise Thee, O God : yea, let all the people praise Thee.

4 O let the nations rejoice and be glad : for Thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.

5 Let the people praise Thee, O God : let all the people praise Thee.

6 Then shall the earth bring forth her increase : and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing.

7 God shall bless us : and all the ends of the world shall fear Him.

Morning.]

PSALM LXVIII.

[*Day-13.*

REMOVAL OF THE ARK TO MOUNT SION.

Proper Psalm for Whit-Sunday.

LET God arise, and let his enemies be scattered : let them also that hate Him flee before Him.

2 Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away : and like as wax melteth at the fire, so let the ungodly perish at the presence of God.

3 But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God : let them also be merry and joyful.

people, as to bring all other nations to own and worship Him, the only true God. It may probably (ver. 7) have been composed for the Feast of Tabernacles, when offerings and sacrifices were presented to Jehovah for the ingathering of the fruits of the earth. See Lev. xxiii. 39.

1. *The light of his countenance]* His gracious favour and blessing. See Numb. vi. 26; Ps. iv. 7.

2. *Thy saving health]* Thy salvation. This verse forms a petition in the prayer of the Church for 'all conditions of men.'

3. *Let the people, &c.]* Not merely the people of Israel, but all the Peoples, or nations of the earth.

6. *Then shall the earth, &c.]* Rather,—The earth hath yielded her fruits. May God, our own God, bless us. Rich and abundant harvests were among the temporal blessings promised to God's ancient people, as the reward of faithfulness and obedience. Lev. xxvi. 4. Compare Ezek. xxxiv. 27.

7. *All the ends of the world, &c.]* The universal extension of the Messiah's kingdom is here foreshadowed. See Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6.

Ps. LXVIII., ascribed by the title in the Bible Version to David, begins with the words used at the moving forward of the ark in the

4 O sing unto God, and sing praises unto his Name : magnify Him that rideth upon the heavens, as it were upon an horse ; praise Him in his Name JAH, and rejoice before Him.

5 He is a Father of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widows : even God in his holy habitation.

6 He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house, and bringeth the prisoners out of captivity : but letteth the runagates continue in scarceness.

7 O God, when Thou wentest forth before the people : when Thou wentest through the wilderness,

8 The earth shook, and the heavens dropped at the presence of God : even as Sinai also was moved at the presence of God, who is the God of Israel.

9 Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance : and refreshedst it when it was weary.

wilderness, Numb. x. 35 ; and may have been written on the occasion of the bringing up of the ark to Mount Zion (see vv. 24, 25, 27). The Psalm has ever been regarded as prophetic of the ascension of Christ, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit which He obtained for men. See John xvi. 7.

4. *Magnify Him that rideth upon the heavens, &c.*] The meaning seems rather to be, 'Raise a highway for Him who rideth through the desert ;' and the allusion is probably to the passage of the ark, on which were the cherubims, through the wilderness. See Exod. xl. 38.

—*His name JAH*] The short form of Jehovah, which means 'self-existing.' Exod. iii. 14. The name Jah is often found in combination with another word, *Hallelu*, 'Praise,'—so making *Hallelu-Jah*, or 'Praise Jehovah,' 'Praise the Lord.'

6. *That maketh men to be of one mind in an house*] "God setteth the solitary in families." God

giveth the desolate a home to dwell in. His Church is the home of the friendless and forsaken.

6. *But letteth the runagates continue in scarceness*] "But the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

7, 8. *O God, when Thou wentest forth, &c.*] These verses are nearly identical with a passage in the Song of Deborah, Judges v. 4, 5.

8. *Even as Sinai also was moved*] "Even Sinai itself was moved." For a description of the wonders which accompanied the descent of the Almighty on Mount Sinai, see Exod. xix. 16—20. As the giving of the law to the Israelites was celebrated at the feast of Pentecost, so we Christians celebrate, on the same great festival, the descent of the Holy Spirit, who came to write his law in our hearts, and to guide us into all the Truth.

9. *A gracious rain*] "A plentiful rain" of gifts or bounties, including 'the manna' and 'the quails,' as well as refreshing showers and water from the rock. Ps. lxxviii. 28. See also Isa. xlv. 3.

10 Thy congregation shall dwell therein : for Thou, O God, hast of thy goodness prepared for the poor.

11 The Lord gave the word : great was the company of the preachers.

12 Kings with their armies did flee, and were discomfited : and they of the household divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove : that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings for their sake : then were they as white as snow in Salmon.

15 As the hill of Basan, so is God's hill : even an high hill, as the hill of Basan.

16 Why hop ye so, ye high hills ? this is God's hill, in the which it pleaseth Him to dwell : yea, the Lord will abide in it for ever.

10. *Thy congregation shall dwell therein*] "Thy congregation hath dwelt therein;" that is, thy people, poor and helpless in themselves, have found a home or houses in the wilderness :

'In desert wild, thy pilgrims poor
Dwelt as in homes of rest secure.'

11. *The Lord gave the word, &c.*] Gave the promise or assurance of victory; and "great was the company of those who published it:" namely, of the women who celebrated the joyful event with timbrels, songs, and dances. Compare Exod. xv. 20; 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7. For the spiritual meaning, see St. Mark xvi. 15—20.

12. *They of the household*] The women that remained at home. See Judges v. 29, 30.

13. *Though ye have lien among the pots*] Among the brick-kilns and furnaces of Egypt: or the meaning may be, When ye lie down in peace beside the sheep-folds of Canaan, ye shall be in a condition of glory and splendour.

14. *For their sake*] or, in it,—

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that is, in the land.

14. *White as snow in Salmon*] On the overthrow of hostile kings, the sunshine of prosperity lightened the land, just as the dark mountain-top of Salmon gleams brightly when covered with snow. Salmon is thought to be the mountain in Samaria, near to Shechem, mentioned in Judges ix. 48.

15. *As the hill of Basan, &c.*] A mountain of God,—a lofty mountain is Mount Basan, but not to be compared in dignity and honour with God's own chosen hill, Mount Zion. Isa. ii. 2; Mic. iv. 1.

16. *Why hop ye so, ye high hills?*] Why are ye moved with envy? Why do ye look askance at Mount Zion for the honour put upon it by God? Ps. xlviii. 1; lxxviii. 69. The high hills are the mighty and proud nations of the world which look with envy and hatred on the favoured people of God. The figure may signify further, that it is in vain for the powers of the earth to resist the kingdom of Christ. See Ps. ii. 1—4; Isa. ii. 2.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels : and the Lord is among them, as in the holy place of Sinai.

18 Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men : yea, even for thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

19 Praised be the Lord daily : even the God who helpeth us, and poureth his benefits upon us.

20 He is our God, even the God of whom cometh salvation : God is the Lord, by whom we escape death.

21 God shall wound the head of his enemies : and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his wickedness.

22 The Lord hath said, I will bring my people again, as I did from Basan : mine own will I bring again, as I did sometime from the deep of the sea.

23 That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies : and that the tongue of thy dogs may be red through the same.

17. *The chariots of God*] The power and majesty of Jehovah are represented under the figure of a mighty conqueror, followed by an immense train of war-chariots, and attended by myriads of the angelic host. See Deut. xx. 1; xxxii. 2; and refer to 2 Kings vi. 17.

18. *Thou art gone up on high*] Thus the singers hymn the ascent of the ark to Mount Zion; and thus in a truer and fuller sense may Christians celebrate the exaltation of the Son of God to his throne of glory.

—*Thou hast led captivity captive*] Thou hast led captive the conquered enemy, (those who made captives of us,) and won from them spoil and tribute for distribution among men. This verse is quoted by St. Paul, Ephes. iv. 8, as prophetic

of our Lord's ascension, and of the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed by Him upon men.

20. *God is the Lord, by whom we escape death*] Unto Jehovah the Lord belong deliverances from death. Deut. xxxii. 39; Rev. i. 18.

22. *As I did from Basan, &c.*] I will bring back my own in triumph, as I did aforetime from Basan, the extreme border of Canaan; and from the depths of the Red Sea. Some consider it to mean that God will bring back the enemies of his people as captives.

23. *That thy foot, &c.*] So that thou shalt plunge thy foot in blood; a striking figure, to signify the overthrow and slaughter of the enemies of Israel. Refer to Ps. lviii. 9; Isa. lxiii. 3.

24 It is well seen, O God, how Thou goest : how Thou, my God and King, goest in the sanctuary.

25 The singers go before, the minstrels follow after : in the midst are the damsels playing with the timbrels.

26 Give thanks, O Israel, unto God the Lord in the congregations : from the ground of the heart.

27 There is little Benjamin their ruler, and the princes of Judah their counsel : the princes of Zabulon, and the princes of Nephthali.

28 Thy God hath sent forth strength for thee : stablish the thing, O God, that Thou hast wrought in us,

29 For thy temple's sake at Jerusalem : so shall kings bring presents unto Thee.

30 When the company of the spear-men, and multitude of the mighty are scattered abroad among the beasts of the people, so that they humbly bring pieces of silver : and when He hath scattered the people that delight in war ;

24—27.] The order of the triumphal procession to Mount Zion in celebration of victory is here described.

26. *From the ground of the heart*] "From the fountain of Israel;" that is, Bless God, ye that are of the fountain [or race] of Israel. See Deut. xxxiii. 28; Isa. xlviii. 1; li. 1.

27. *Little Benjamin, &c.*] Rather, Benjamin the youngest. Two tribes to the south, and two to the north, are named as representatives of the whole number, all of which, no doubt, took their place in the procession. Zebulun and Nephthali distinguished themselves in the wars under Deborah and Barak. Judges v. 18.

28. *Sent forth strength*] Made thee strong and secure; hath firmly established thy power.

— *Stablish the thing, O God, &c.*] Secure to us the fruits of our late victory.

29. *For thy temple's sake, &c.*] Because of thy temple, because of thy manifested glory and power, as the God of Israel, 2 Chron. xxxii. 13; Isa. lx. 3. The words may be regarded as prophetic of the gifts offered by the Gentile kings to Christ, Matt. ii. 11.

30. *When the company of the spear-men*] The 'spear-men' and the 'mighty' must signify the powerful nations in arms against God's people; but this difficult verse is more clearly rendered as follows: Rebuke, *i.e.* restrain, the wild beast of the reeds, the herd of bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one submit himself with pieces of silver. "Scatter Thou the people that delight in war." By 'the wild beast of the reeds' is meant the power of heathen Egypt, represented by the Hippopotamus or Behemoth, Job xl. 26. The 'bulls,' and the 'calves' of the

31 Then shall the princes come out of Egypt : the Morians' land shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing unto God, O ye kingdoms of the earth : O sing praises unto the Lord ;

33 Who sitteth in the heavens over all from the beginning : lo, He doth send out his voice, yea, and that a mighty voice.

34 Ascribe ye the power to God over Israel : his worship, and strength is in the clouds.

35 O God, wonderful art Thou in thy holy places : even the God of Israel ; He will give strength and power unto his people ; blessed be God.

Evening.]

PSALM LXIX.

[Day 13.]

DAVID THE TYPE OF CHRIST IN SUFFERING.

Proper Psalm for Good Friday.

SAVE me, O God : for the waters are come in, even unto my soul.

2 I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is :

people, are the powerful kings and proud rebellious people who opposed themselves to the God of Israel.' To submit with 'pieces of silver,' is to offer gifts of money as tokens of allegiance.

31. *Then shall the princes come out of Egypt*] When the enemies of Israel have been subdued, and the Church firmly established at Jerusalem, Princes shall come from Egypt [the heathen nations] to sue for peace and friendship. Refer to 1 Kings ix. 15, and x. 2. The Morians' land [Ethiopia] shall stretch out her hands as a suppliant, crying for help. See Acts xvi. 9. This passage is strikingly illustrated by the remarkable prophecy, Isa. xlv. 14.

35. *He will give strength, &c.]* Rather, It is He that giveth strength, &c.

Ps. LXIX. is ascribed to David both in the Bible Version and by St. Paul, Rom. xi. 9 ; and may be compared with Psalms xxii. and xxxv. It is quoted more frequently in the New Testament than any Psalm, except Ps. xxii. ; and the Church, by appointing it to be read on the day of our Lord's crucifixion, confirms the generally received interpretation of it as prophetic of his passion and death.

1. *Even unto my soul*] So as to endanger my life. The image is taken from a person in danger of being overwhelmed by the rising flood, who cries out for help. The prayer is regarded by the Church as that of Christ in his Passion, when his soul was 'exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.'

2. *In the deep mire*] Pits and cisterns were often used as dungeons

I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.

3 I am weary of crying ; my throat is dry : my sight faileth me for waiting so long upon my God.

4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head : they that are mine enemies, and would destroy me guiltless, are mighty.

5 I paid them the things that I never took : God, Thou knowest my simpleness, and my faults are not hid from Thee.

6 Let not them that trust in Thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my cause : let not those that seek Thee be confounded through me, O Lord God of Israel.

7 And why ? for thy sake have I suffered reproof : shame hath covered my face.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren : even an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For the zeal of thine house hath even eaten me : and the rebukes of them that rebuked Thee are fallen upon me.

to confine prisoners in. Such was that into which Jeremiah was cast. Jer. xxxviii. 6. See also Ps. xl. 2.

3. *For waiting so long upon my God*] While I wait for my God, while I strain my eyes in looking earnestly to God for relief and deliverance.

4. *Without a cause*] Our Lord, in speaking of the hatred of the world to Him, says, that it was in fulfilment of this Scripture. John xv. 25. See also Ps. xxxv. 19, and note.

5. *I paid them the things, &c.*] I gave up that which I took not away. So Christ paid the penalty of sins, from which, as from all sin, he was alone free. Isa. liii. 5 ; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

— *My simpleness*] “ My foolishness,” that is, in Scripture language, my wickedness. The Psalmist protests to Him who searcheth the

heart, his innocence of the charges brought against him.

6. *Be confounded through me*] That is, By seeing me, though innocent, suffer.

7. *Reproof*] The scorn and reproach of the world.

8. *Stranger unto my brethren, even an alien*] Compare John i. 11 ; vii. 5. Alien has the same meaning as stranger, and thus the two clauses of the verse balance one another, forming a perfect example of parallelism, or one member of the verse answering or running parallel to the other.

9. *The zeal of thine house hath even eaten me*] A jealous regard for the honour of thy sanctuary hath worn me away. See John ii. 17.

— *And the rebukes, &c.*] These words are applied by St. Paul to our blessed Lord, Rom. xv. 3.

10 I wept, and chastened myself with fasting : and that was turned to my reproof.

11 I put on sackcloth also : and they jested upon me.

12 They that sit in the gate speak against me : and the drunkards make songs upon me.

13 But, Lord, I make my prayer unto Thee : in an acceptable time.

14 Hear me, O God, in the multitude of thy mercy : even in the truth of thy salvation.

15 Take me out of the mire, that I sink not : O let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

16 Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up : and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

17 Hear me, O Lord, for thy loving-kindness is comfortable : turn Thee unto me according to the multitude of thy mercies.

18 And hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble : O haste Thee, and hear me.

19 Draw nigh unto my soul, and save it : O deliver me, because of mine enemies.

20 Thou hast known my reproof, my shame, and my dishonour : mine adversaries are all in thy sight.

21 Thy rebuke hath broken my heart ; I am full of heaviness : I looked for some to have pity on me, but

11. *I put on sackcloth also*] Sackcloth was the garb of mourning and humiliation. See note on Ps. xxx. 12.

12. *They that sit in the gate*] The judges who with the elders sat in the gate of the city, to administer justice. The Psalmist thus complains that he is become a victim of injustice and contempt with both rulers and people, with the highest and the lowest alike.

13. *An acceptable time*] A time of grace when God is ready to hear. Compare Isa. xlix. 8, and 2 Cor. vi. 2. An "acceptable time" has

probably the same meaning as "a time when Thou mayest be found." Ps. xxxii. 7.

15. *Take me out of the mire*] The mire, the waters, and the floods, here and in verses 1, 2, are figures signifying the depths of trouble and affliction.

21. *Thy rebuke*] Rather, "Reproach hath broken my heart," not however the judgments of God, but the revilings of man.

— *I am full of heaviness*] 'He began to be sorrowful and very heavy.' Matt. xxvi. 37.

— *I looked for some, &c.*] So;

there was no man, neither found I any to comfort me.

22 They gave me gall to eat : and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

23 Let their table be made a snare to take themselves withal : and let the things that should have been for their wealth be unto them an occasion of falling.

24 Let their eyes be blinded, that they see not : and ever bow Thou down their backs.

25 Pour out thine indignation upon them : and let thy wrathful displeasure take hold of them.

26 Let their habitation be void : and no man to dwell in their tents.

27 For they persecute Him whom Thou hast smitten : and they talk how they may vex them whom Thou hast wounded.

28 Let them fall from one wickedness to another : and not come into thy righteousness.

too, was our Lord Christ left alone to suffer, and forsaken at his greatest need. See Luke xxii. 45 ; Matt. xxvi. 56.

22. *They gave me gall to eat, &c.*] How exactly this prophecy was fulfilled in the case of our Lord, we read in Matt. xxvii. 34 : 'They gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall.' See also John xix. 28, 29.

23. *Their table*] That is, their abundance and worldly prosperity. This and the following six verses are to be regarded as the expression of the Psalmist's desire that the just judgment of God would overtake his enemies : they also foreshadow the desolate and afflicted condition of the Jews as a nation.

— *Their wealth*] *Wealth* in its old meaning is not riches, but *weal*, or well-being. What was sent for their good would, by their mode of using it, become an evil and a snare.

24. *Let their eyes be blinded, &c.*] This verse is quoted by St. Paul, as

foreshowing the blindness and obstinacy of the Jewish people in rejecting their Messiah, Rom. xi. 9, 10. See also Isa. vi. 9, 10.

25. *Pour out thine indignation, &c.*] The reader is referred to the note on ver. 5 of Psalm cix.

26. *Let their habitation be void*] 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate,' Matt. xxiii. 38 ; Acts i. 20. This prophecy was strictly fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans A.D. 70, and the dispersion of the Jewish people, who have never since returned thither.

27. *And they talk how they may vex, &c.*] They aggravate the sufferings of those whom Thou hast stricken, by talking of them with glee and triumph. Ps. xli. 7, 8.

28. *Fall from one wickedness to another*] That is, fill up the measure of their iniquities. See 1 Thess. iii. 15.

— *Come into thy righteousness*]

29 Let them be wiped out of the book of the living : and not be written among the righteous.

30 As for me, when I am poor and in heaviness : thy help, O God, shall lift me up.

31 I will praise the Name of God with a song : and magnify it with thanksgiving.

32 This also shall please the Lord : better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

33 The humble shall consider this, and be glad : seek ye after God, and your soul shall live.

34 For the Lord heareth the poor : and despiseth not his prisoners.

35 Let heaven and earth praise Him : the sea, and all that moveth therein.

36 For God will save Sion, and build the cities of Judah : that men may dwell there, and have it in possession.

37 The posterity also of his servants shall inherit it : and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

PSALM LXX.

FOR DELIVERANCE FROM DANGER.

HASTE Thee, O God, to deliver me : make haste to help me, O Lord.

That is, be justified and obtain pardon. See Jer. xviii. 23.

29. *Be wiped out of the book*] 'Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book,' Exod. xxxii. 33. Refer also to Ezek. xiii. 9; Mal. iii. 16; Rev. iii. 5.

32. *Better than a bullock, &c.*] Better, that is, than the most perfect sacrifice that could be offered on the altar.

33. *Your soul shall live*] Or, your hearts and spirits shall revive. See Ps. xx. 26, and note.

34. *His prisoners*] His servants in bondage or affliction.

37. *The posterity also of his servants, &c.*] The descendants from generation to generation of God's true worshippers, shall find a home in the Church of Christ, and so become citizens of the true Jerusalem.

Ps. LXX. This Psalm is a repetition of part of Psalm xl. verses 16—21. The first verse supplies the well-known suffrages, or short petitions of our morning and evening prayer—

'O God, make speed to save us.
'O Lord, make haste to help us.'

2 Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul : let them be turned backward and put to confusion that wish me evil.

3 Let them for their reward be soon brought to shame : that cry over me, There, there.

4 But let all those that seek Thee be joyful and glad in Thee : and let all such as delight in thy salvation say alway, The Lord be praised.

5 As for me, I am poor and in misery : haste Thee unto me, O God.

6 Thou art my helper, and my redeemer : O Lord, make no long tarrying.

Morning.]

PSALM LXXI.

[*Day 14.*

GOD OUR SUPPORT IN YOUTH, AND REFUGE IN OLD AGE.

A Psalm for the Visitation of the Sick.

IN Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion : but rid me, and deliver me, in thy righteousness ; incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

2 Be Thou my strong hold, whereunto I may alway resort : Thou hast promised to help me, for Thou art my house of defence, and my castle.

3 Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the ungodly : out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

4 For Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for : Thou art my hope, even from my youth.

2. *Seek after my soul]* Plot against my life.

Ps. LXXI. is supposed to have been written by David in his old age. It contains a prayer for deliverance from enemies, and the expression of perfect confidence in God's mercy.

1—3.] The first three verses are nearly the same as those at the

opening of the 31st Psalm.

1. *Rid me]* that is, Set me free.
— *In thy righteousness]* According to thy faithful word of promise, 'If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.' John i. 9.

2. *My strong hold]* The rock or fortress in which I may dwell securely—and to which I may flee for refuge.

5 Through Thee have I been holden up ever since I was born : Thou art He that took me out of my mother's womb ; my praise shall be always of Thee.

6 I am become as it were a monster unto many : but my sure trust is in Thee.

7 O let my mouth be filled with thy praise : that I may sing of thy glory and honour all the day long.

8 Cast me not away in the time of age : forsake me not when my strength faileth me.

9 For mine enemies speak against me, and they that lay wait for my soul take their counsel together, saying : ' God hath forsaken him ; persecute him, and take him, for there is none to deliver him.'

10 Go not far from me, O God : my God, haste Thee to help me.

11 Let them be confounded and perish that are against my soul : let them be covered with shame and dishonour that seek to do me evil.

12 As for me, I will patiently abide alway : and will praise Thee more and more.

13 My mouth shall daily speak of thy righteousness and salvation : for I know no end thereof.

14 I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God : and will make mention of thy righteousness only.

15 Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up

5. *Been holden up*, &c.] Compare Ps. xxii. 10.

6. *A monster*] "A wonder;" something strange and startling.

9. *Persecute him*] Persecute in old English is the same as pursue.

11. *Let them be confounded*, &c.] The threat of Ahithophel,—'I will arise and pursue after David this night : and I will come upon him while he is weary and weak-handed, and will make him afraid ; and all the people that are with him shall flee ; and I will smite the king only,'—this threat will serve to show the treacherous and cruel

character of the enemies upon whom the Psalmist prays that God will execute judgment. See 2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2.

13. *For I know no end thereof*] Thy mercies and deliverances are more than I can number.

14. *I will go forth*, &c.] The true meaning of this verse seems to be,—I will go into the Temple full of the mighty deeds of the Lord ; and will make his goodness and truth the sole theme of my praise. Will ascribe all to thy favour and goodness, not to any might or merit of my own.

until now : therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works.

16 Forsake me not, O God, in mine old age, when I am gray-headed : until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to all them that are yet for to come.

17 Thy righteousness, O God, is very high : and great things are they that Thou hast done ; O God, who is like unto Thee ?

18 O what great troubles and adversities hast Thou shewed me ! and yet didst Thou turn and refresh me : yea, and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again.

19 Thou hast brought me to great honour : and comforted me on every side.

20 Therefore will I praise Thee and thy faithfulness, O God, playing upon an instrument of musick : unto Thee will I sing upon the harp, O Thou Holy One of Israel.

21 My lips will be fain when I sing unto Thee : and so will my soul whom Thou hast delivered.

22 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long : for they are confounded and brought unto shame that seek to do me evil.

PSALM LXXII.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST IN PEACE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

GIVE the King thy judgments, O God : and thy righteousness unto the King's son.

18. *Yet didst Thou turn and refresh me*] "Thou shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth," that is, from the lowest state of misery and affliction.

21. *My lips will be fain*] "My lips shall greatly rejoice," shall shout for joy. *Fain* is an old word for glad. See Ps. xxxiv. 12, and

note. We still say, I would *fain* do so and so.

Ps. LXXII. is entitled in the Bible, "A Psalm for or of Solomon," and is throughout prophetic of the advent and universal dominion of the Messiah.

1. *Give the King, &c.*] Grant that Solomon who is king, and also

2 Then shall He judge thy people according unto right : and defend the poor.

3 The mountains also shall bring peace : and the little hills righteousness unto the people.

4 He shall keep the simple folk by their right : defend the children of the poor, and punish the wrong doer.

5 They shall fear Thee, as long as the sun and moon endureth : from one generation to another.

6 He shall come down like the rain into a fleece of wool : even as the drops that water the earth.

7 In his time shall the righteous flourish : yea, and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth.

8 His dominion shall be also from the one sea to the other : and from the flood unto the world's end.

9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall kneel before Him : his enemies shall lick the dust.

the king's (David's) son, may reign in righteousness,—Isa. xxxii. 1— and minister true judgment unto the people.

3. *The mountains also, &c.*] Allusion is perhaps made to the custom of proclaiming peace, or other national tidings, from some high place. Isa. xl. 9; lii. 7. The plain meaning of the verse is,—that 'peace,' the blessed fruit of 'righteousness,' or just government, shall reign over mountains and hills; in other words, throughout the whole land.

4. *The simple folk by their right*] He shall see justice done to the helpless and unprotected.

5. *They shall fear Thee, &c.*] They, thy servants, one generation after another, shall reverence and worship Thee as long as the world lasts. Such language, it is obvious, can, in strictness, be applied to Him only, of whose 'kingdom there shall be no end.' Luke i. 33.

6. *He shall come down, &c.*] He,

the righteous and peace-loving King. The coming of the Prince of Peace is compared in its influences to the silent, refreshing, and fertilizing effects of rain upon the earth.

6. *Into a fleece of wool*] The original word signifies something either sheared or mown; but the Bible Version, "upon the mown grass," supported as it is by the best authorities, is to be preferred.

7. *Abundance of peace*] This was to be one of the blessings of the reign of the Messiah,—Himself the Prince of Peace. Thus, Isaiah, in the spirit of prophecy, says, 'The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.' Isa. xxxii. 17.

8. *From the flood, &c.*] i. e. from the river Euphrates, which was the eastern boundary of the kingdom of Israel under Solomon. Deut. xi. 24. The universal dominion of the Messiah is here foretold; and,

10 The kings of Tharsis and of the isles shall give presents : the kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts.

11 All kings shall fall down before Him : all nations shall do Him service.

12 For He shall deliver the poor when he crieth : the needy also, and him that hath no helper.

13 He shall be favourable to the simple and needy : and shall preserve the souls of the poor.

14 He shall deliver their souls from falsehood and wrong : and dear shall their blood be in his sight.

15 He shall live, and unto Him shall be given of the gold of Arabia : prayer shall be made ever unto Him, and daily shall He be praised.

16 There shall be an heap of corn in the earth, high upon the hills : his fruit shall shake like Libanus, and shall be green in the city like grass upon the earth.

in this sense, the words are quoted by the prophet Zechariah, ix. 10.

10. *The kings of Tharsis and of the isles*] By *Tharsis* (Tartessus) we are probably to understand the coasts of Spain. 1 Kings x. 22. Refer also to note on Ps. xliii. 6. The isles are the islands and northern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. — *Saba*] or Seba, was the eldest son of Cush, Gen. x. 7; the family and tribe ultimately settled in that part of Africa which is now known as *Ethiopia*.

— *To give presents and to bring gifts* is here either to pay tribute in token of allegiance, or to present offerings in acknowledgment of favours received.

11. *All kings shall fall down before Him*] The kings of the earth shall be brought to worship and serve King Messiah. The adoration and gifts offered by the wise men to the infant Saviour may be regarded as a type of the homage and submission of the Gentile world. Matt. ii. 11.

12. *He shall deliver the poor, &c.*] This verse and the two following contain a description of the just and merciful rule of Solomon; and at the same time a prophecy of the reign of Christ, whose especial mission it was to bind up the broken-hearted, and to give rest to the weary and heavy laden. Isa. xli. 17; lxi. 1—3; Matt. xi. 28.

15. *He shall live, &c.*] The allusion is to Him who liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore. Rev. i. 18. See also Jer. xxiii. 5. 'A king shall reign and prosper.'

16. *An heap of corn, &c.*] In token of God's favour and blessing there shall be abundance of corn in the land, even to the very tops of the mountains.

— *His fruit shall shake, &c.*] The crops of corn shall be so high and heavy that they shall wave and resound in the wind like the cedar forests of Lebanon.

— *And shall be green*] The meaning rather is, *They*, the inhabitants of the city, shall spring

17 His Name shall endure for ever ; his Name shall remain under the sun among the posterities : which shall be blessed through Him, and all the heathen shall praise Him.

18 Blessed be the Lord God, even the God of Israel : which only doeth wondrous things ;

19 And blessed be the Name of his Majesty for ever : and all the earth shall be filled with his Majesty. Amen, Amen.

Evening.]

PSALM LXXIII.

[Day 14.]

IMPATIENCE AND DISTRUST CORRECTED.

TRULY God is loving unto Israel : even unto such as are of a clean heart.

2 Nevertheless, my feet were almost gone : my treadings had well-nigh slipt.

3 And why? I was grieved at the wicked : I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity.

up and flourish like grass of the earth. In this verse, therefore, God's choicest temporal blessings,—abundance, and a rapidly increasing population, which marked the prosperous reign of Solomon,—are the types and emblems of the wonderful growth and extension of the Messiah's kingdom. See Acts vi. 7.

17. *His Name shall remain*] "His Name shall be continued as long as the sun."

19. *Amen, Amen*] The doxology in verses 18 and 19, and the final Amen, mark the end of the *second* of the five books into which the Hebrews portioned out their Psalter.

Psalms LXXIII. — LXXXIII. are all ascribed in the Bible titles to Asaph, but probably only four besides this, namely, LXXIII. LXXVIII. LXXXI. and LXXXII. *were written by David's chief mu-*

sician. The rest belong to another Asaph in a later age.

Ps. LXXIII. sets before us the peculiar trials to which the faith of the Israelite of old was exposed by the prosperity and success of the ungodly. Jehovah was revealed to him as a God of justice, rewarding the righteous and punishing the evil-doer; but the moral government of God might be questioned, when his enemies were exalted, and his true worshippers depressed and suffering. The Psalmist's doubts are all cleared up by the light thrown upon them in the Sanctuary,—a light which makes plain the ways of God in permitting the wicked to prevail for a time, that their final overthrow may be the more signal.

2. *Nevertheless*] "But as for me."

3. *I was grieved, &c.*] "For I

4 For they are in no peril of death : but are lusty and strong.

5 They come in no misfortune like other folk : neither are they plagued like other men.

6 And this is the cause that they are so holden with pride : and overwhelmed with cruelty.

7 Their eyes swell with fatness : and they do even what they lust.

8 They corrupt other, and speak of wicked blasphemy : their talking is against the Most High.

9 For they stretch forth their mouth unto the heaven : and their tongue goeth through the world.

10 Therefore fall the people unto them : and there-out suck they no small advantage.

11 Tush, say they, how should God perceive it : is there knowledge in the Most High ?

12 Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession : and I said,

was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." The Psalmist here confesses that he was hurt and offended at seeing the proud and ungodly in the enjoyment of ease and prosperity.

4. *Are in no peril of death, &c.*] Have no anxiety or apprehension about death; no wasting care or mortal disease which binds them as captives to death. *But are lusty*, that is, full of life and health.

6. *So holden with pride, &c.*] The Psalmist pictures the prosperous man of the world as encircled with the chain of pride, and clothed with the robe of violence. The figures are preserved in the Bible Version: "Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment."

— *Overwhelmed* in this place is the same as enveloped in, wrapped round and round with.

7. *What they lust*] Whatever their passion or fancy suggests; or, perhaps, the meaning may be, the thoughts of their hearts exceed all bounds of justice and moderation.

8. *They corrupt other*] Or, they scoff; and *speak of wicked blasphemy*, that is, their conversation is utterly corrupt and profane.

9. *They stretch forth their mouth, &c.*] Their proud and impious tongue spares neither God nor man. 2 Pet. ii. 18.

10. *Therefore fall the people, &c.*] Therefore do the people, deluded by their seeming prosperity, flock after them; and thereby these wicked boasters derive great wealth and power.

12. *And I said, &c.*] To no purpose is it that I have kept my heart pure, and my hands clean, if the wicked, who transgress all the commandments of God, are allowed to prosper in the world. For an ex-

Then have I cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency.

13 All the day long have I been punished : and chastened every morning.

14 Yea, and I had almost said even as they : but lo, then I should have condemned the generation of thy children.

15 Then thought I to understand this : but it was too hard for me,

16 Until I went into the sanctuary of God : then understood I the end of these men ;

17 Namely, how Thou dost set them in slippery places : and castest them down, and destroyest them.

18 Oh, how suddenly do they consume : perish and come to a fearful end !

19 Yea, even like as a dream when one awaketh : so shalt Thou make their image to vanish out of the city.

20 Thus my heart was grieved : and it went even through my reins.

21 So foolish was I, and ignorant : even as it were a beast before Thee.

planation of the expression, *washed mine hands in innocency*, refer to note on Ps. xxvi. 6.

13. *All the day long, &c.*] For, notwithstanding my strict observance of God's law, I endure constant trouble and suffering.

14. *I had almost said, &c.*] I was nearly falling into this thoughtless way of talking and reasoning, verse 11 ; but had I done so, had I judged the righteous to be abandoned of God, because of their having fallen into adversity ; or, again, had I said that it was vain and useless to follow after holiness, I should have wronged his true servants, and have proved myself a traitor to their cause.

16. *Until I went, &c.*] The question, *why God allowed the wicked to prosper in the world,*

was too difficult for the Psalmist's natural reason and understanding ; but it was, at length, cleared up by the light thrown upon it by religion, and by communing with God in his house, where he was taught to look to the sinner's latter end.

19. *Make their image to vanish, &c.*] Or, "despise their image," that is, expose to public contempt and derision, their false and empty show of prosperity, so as to convince all men, that it was a mere floating *image* of happiness, as unreal as a dream.

20. *My reins*] Meaning, my inmost soul.

21. *As it were a beast, &c.*] As one who had lost his reason, and looked only to the outward appearance of things.

22 Nevertheless, I am always by Thee : for Thou hast holden me by my right hand.

23 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel : and after that receive me with glory.

24 Whom have I in heaven but Thee : and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee.

25 My flesh and my heart faileth : but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

26 For lo, they that forsake Thee shall perish : Thou hast destroyed all them that commit fornication against Thee.

27 But it is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God : and to speak of all thy works in the gates of the daughter of Sion.

PSALM LXXIV.

APPEAL FOR GOD'S HELP AND PROTECTION.

O GOD, wherefore art Thou absent from us so long : why is thy wrath so hot against the sheep of thy pasture ?

22. *Always by Thee*] Supported by Thee at all times, and kept in thy presence, notwithstanding my own ignorance and folly.

23. *And after that, &c.*] "And afterward receive me to glory." The Psalmist expresses his assured confidence, that God will graciously deliver him from his distressing doubts, and will advance him to honour : but, further, the words may imply a belief, that God will raise him to a future life of glory. Compare Ps. xlix. 15.

25. *My flesh and my heart, &c.*] My bodily powers may decay, but God sustains my spirit, and will be my eternal portion. In this passage we discover the expectation of a future resurrection. Compare Job xix. 25—27.

26. *Commit fornication against*

Thee] The Church is constantly represented as the Bride of the Lord, see Isa. liv. 5 : and those members of the Church who desert his service for that of idols are said to be guilty of fornication or adultery.

27. *It is good for me, &c.*] Or, according to a more literal translation, As for me, nearness to God is my good.

— *The gates, &c.*] *i. e.* The principal places of resort in Jerusalem.

Ps. LXXIV.—This Psalm was probably written after the capture of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans, B.C. 588. After a pathetic description of the desolation of the temple of Jerusalem, and the affliction of the

2 O think upon thy congregation : whom Thou hast purchased, and redeemed of old.

3 Think upon the tribe of thine inheritance : and mount Sion, wherein Thou hast dwelt.

4 Lift up thy feet, that Thou mayest utterly destroy every enemy : which hath done evil in thy sanctuary.

5 Thine adversaries roar in the midst of thy congregations : and set up their banners for tokens.

6 He that hewed timber afore out of the thick trees : was known to bring it to an excellent work.

7 But now they break down all the carved work thereof : with axes and hammers.

8 They have set fire upon thy holy places : and have defiled the dwelling place of thy Name, even unto the ground.

9 Yea, they said in their hearts, ' Let us make havock of them altogether ' : thus have they burnt up all the houses of God in the land.

people, the Psalmist proceeds to ground a plea for God's merciful interference, on his miracles in behalf of his people in the old time.

1. *Wherefore art Thou absent, &c.*] The people long oppressed, and still suffering under the heaviest national trials, remonstrate with the Almighty for abandoning his heritage, and for no longer being present, as of old, to deliver them from their enemies.

4. *Lift up thy feet, &c.*] The authorised version differs materially from this of the Prayer Book, rendering the passage thus : " Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations," that is, Arise and come to visit the places utterly desolate : the enemy hath destroyed everything in thy sanctuary.

5. *Thine adversaries roar, &c.*] The enemies of God raise a shout of triumph in his holy temple, and set up their own heathen ensigns, as tokens of sovereignty, in place of

the symbols of Jehovah's presence.

6. *He that hewed timber, &c.*] This whole verse is more closely rendered as follows : ' They (the enemy) are like men bringing up axes into a thick forest.' So reckless are they in the work of destruction.

7. *But now they break down, &c.*] The builders of the temple in the reign of King Solomon, prepared and carved the cedar-wood with nice and delicate skill ; but all this beautiful work is now hewn and broken down by the axes and hammers of the destroyers.

8. *Defiled*] Profaned.

— *The dwelling place of thy Name*] So the temple on Mount Sion was called, as, for instance, in Deut. xii. 5, ' The place which the Lord your God shall choose to put his Name there ; ' and again in 1 Kings viii. 20.

9. *All the houses of God, &c.*] The synagogues in every city, of

10 We see not our tokens, there is not one prophet more : no, not one is there among us, that understandeth any more.

11 O God, how long shall the adversary do this dishonour : how long shall the enemy blaspheme thy Name, for ever ?

12 Why withdrawest Thou thy hand : why pluckest Thou not thy right hand out of thy bosom to consume the enemy ?

13 For God is my King of old : the help that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself.

14 Thou didst divide the sea through thy power : Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

15 Thou smotest the heads of leviathan in pieces : and gavest him to be meat for the people in the wilderness.

16 Thou broughtest out fountains and waters out of the hard rocks : Thou driedst up mighty waters.

17 The day is thine, and the night is thine : Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

18 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth : Thou hast made summer and winter.

which we read so frequently (see Acts xv. 21), did not exist till after the return of the Israelites from their captivity. What probably, therefore, we are to understand is, that the enemy had destroyed every place of assembly of God's people, perhaps, every altar which marked the spot in which God had appeared to their fathers.

10. *We see not our tokens, &c.* We see none of the signs of God's presence or favour, no sign of coming deliverance.

— *There is not one prophet more* [“There is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any one who knoweth how long.” See Lam. ii. 9 ; Ezek. vii. 26.]

12. *Out of thy bosom, &c.* Why is thy hand, the instrument of

justice and vengeance, allowed to rest in thy bosom ? Why is it not upraised to strike down thy enemies ?

13. *The help that is done, &c.* It is God Himself alone that worketh deliverance and salvation in the midst of the land.

14, 15. *The heads of the dragons, &c.* The leviathan, dragon, or crocodile, is a symbol of Pharaoh, his captains, and his army, who were destroyed in the Red Sea. Isa. li. 9—11.

15. *The people in the wilderness* The wild inhabitants of the Arabian shore, who stripped and plundered the dead bodies of the Egyptians which were cast up by the waves of the Red Sea.

18. *Thou hast set all the borders*

19 Remember this, O Lord, how the enemy hath rebuked : and how the foolish people hath blasphemed thy Name.

20 O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the enemies : and forget not the congregation of the poor for ever.

21 Look upon the covenant : for all the earth is full of darkness, and cruel habitations.

22 O let not the simple go away ashamed : but let the poor and needy give praise unto thy Name.

23 Arise, O God, maintain thine own cause : remember how the foolish man blasphemeth Thee daily.

24 Forget not the voice of thine enemies : the presumption of them that hate Thee increaseth ever more and more.

Morning.]

PSALM LXXV.

[*Day 15.*

GOD THE ONLY SURE STAY OF A NATION.

UNTO Thee, O God, do we give thanks : yea, unto Thee do we give thanks.

2 Thy Name also is so nigh : and that do thy wondrous works declare.

Fixed all the boundaries of the earth.

19. *The foolish people*] Meaning as elsewhere (ver. 23), the wicked nation, the people that had no knowledge or fear of God.

20. *The soul of thy turtle-dove*] The life of thy innocent, defenceless, and confiding people.

21. *Look upon the covenant*, &c.] Remember the covenant by which Thou hast declared Thyself the God of thy people Israel, and their defence against all their enemies, Lev. xxvi. 22; for the dark places of the land (those parts of the country which were overrun and occupied by the Chaldeans) are full of abodes of violence.

22. *O let not the simple*, &c.] "*O let not the oppressed return*

ashamed," that is, confounded at the rejection of their humble prayer.

24. *The presumption*, &c.] "The tumult of those that rise up against Thee increaseth continually."

Ps. LXXV. suits the period of alarm and distress which were shared by king and people alike when Sennacherib came up against Jerusalem, threatening havoc and destruction, B.C. 718. See 2 Kings xviii.; 2 Chron. xxxii.; Isa. xxxvi. Praise is offered to the Lord Jehovah, as the just and discriminating Judge, who will raise up the helpless and oppressed that trust in Him, but will put down the proud and ungodly.

2. *Thy Name also is so nigh*] Thou, O God, art ever near to

3 When I receive the congregation : I shall judge according unto right.

4 The earth is weak, and all the inhabitants thereof : I bear up the pillars of it.

5 I said unto the fools, 'Deal not so madly' : and to the ungodly, 'Set not up your horn.

6 'Set not up your horn on high : and speak not with a stiff neck.'

7 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west : nor yet from the south.

8 And why? God is the Judge : he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

9 For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red : it is full mixed, and He poureth out of the same.

10 As for the dregs thereof : all the ungodly of the earth shall drink them, and suck them out.

11 But I will talk of the God of Jacob : and praise Him for ever.

defend and protect thy people; 'a very present help in trouble,' Ps. xlv. 1.

3. *When I receive the congregation*] To the grateful address of his people, Jehovah replies, When I hold the solemn assembly—when the time for judgment is come—I will give sentence with justice. Ps. lii. 13.

4. *The earth is weak, &c.*] While the earth itself seems about to be dissolved, and all its inhabitants are utterly powerless, the Lord alone sustains the world on its foundations.

5. *I said unto the fools, &c.*] In these words the Psalmist, speaking in behalf of the people, and confiding in the promise of Jehovah, addresses their proud invaders.

6. *Set not up your horn, &c.*] Do not arrogantly exalt yourselves as

if already secure of victory. See Isa. xxxvii. 10—13.

7. *For promotion cometh, &c.*] It is not to human allies from any quarter that the Israelites looked for deliverance, but to the all-righteous, all-powerful God of heaven, on whose protection they could securely rely.

9. *In the hand of the Lord, &c.*] The Lord gives their respective portions to the several nations; either the cup of prosperity and blessing, or as here, the cup of judgment and woe. Isa. li. 17.

— *It is full mixed*] Wine was very commonly mixed with spices to make it stronger.

10. *The dregs thereof*] The ungodly shall be condemned to drain the bitterest portion of the cup of affliction, even to the last drop. Cf. Isa. li. 17; Jer. xxv. 16, 18.

12 All the horns of the ungodly also will I break :
and the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

PSALM LXXVI.

NATIONAL THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY.

IN Jewry is God known : his Name is great in
Israel.

2 At Salem is his tabernacle : and his dwelling
in Sion.

3 There brake He the arrows of the bow : the
shield, the sword, and the battle.

4 Thou art of more honour and might : than the
hills of the robbers.

5 The proud are robbed, they have slept their sleep :
and all the men whose hands were mighty have found
nothing.

6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob : both the chariot
and horse are fallen.

7 Thou, even Thou art to be feared : and who may
stand in thy sight when Thou art angry ?

8 Thou didst cause thy judgment to be heard from
heaven : the earth trembled, and was still,

Ps. LXXVI. is supposed to have
been written and sung in celebra-
tion of the deliverance of Jerusalem
by the miraculous destruction of
Sennacherib's army, B.C. 710. See
2 Kings xix. 35, and Isa. xxxvi.
xxxvii.

1. *Jewry*] Judah. John vii. 1.

2. *Salem*] Salem, which means
"Peace," was the original name of
Jerusalem, the 'vision of peace.'
Gen. xiv. 18.

3. *There brake He, &c.*] The
allusion is, probably, to the utter
overthrow and destruction of the
Assyrian army which came up
against Mount Sion. 2 Kings xix.
35.

4. *Thou art of more honour, &c.*]

Thou, Jehovah, art mightier than
the strongholds of the invaders—
or, it may be, than the robber-chiefs
themselves.

5. *The proud are robbed*] "The
stout-hearted are spoiled;" they
sleep the sleep of death.

— *And all the men, &c.*] "And
none of the men of might have
found their hands;" in other words,
The mighty have become powerless.

6. *The chariot and horse are
fallen, &c.*] If the description refers
to the destruction of Sennache-
rib's army by the angel of God,
nothing can be more graphic than
the Bible Version, "Both the
chariot and horse are cast into a
deep sleep."

9 When God arose to judgment : and to help all the meek upon earth.

10 The fierceness of man shall turn to thy praise : and the fierceness of them shalt Thou refrain.

11 Promise unto the Lord your God, and keep it, all ye that are round about Him : bring presents unto Him that ought to be feared.

12 He shall refrain the spirit of princes : and is wonderful among the kings of the earth.

PSALM LXXVII.

PAST MERCIES A SOURCE OF COMFORT IN AFFLICTION.

I WILL cry unto God with my voice : even unto God will I cry with my voice, and He shall hearken unto me.

2 In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord : my sore ran, and ceased not in the night-season ; my soul refused comfort.

3 When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God : when my heart is vexed, I will complain.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking : I am so feeble, that I cannot speak.

10. *The fierceness of man, &c.*] The angry passions of men, controlled and directed by Thee, shall become the means of promoting thy glory, and what remaineth of wrath Thou shalt restrain. See Isa. xxxvii. 29.

11. *Promise unto the Lord, &c.*] Make your vows unto Jehovah and perform them. Deut. xxiii. 21. The counsel is addressed to *all that are round about Him*—that is, to the people of Israel, who were in covenant with God.

12. *He shall refrain*] ‘He will subdue the spirit of princes ; He is to be feared by the kings of the earth.’

Ps. LXXVII. is of uncertain date, but contains a fountain of rich

consolation (namely, the experience or memory of God’s loving-kindness and mercy) for all who are overwhelmed with grief or disquieted with doubts.

1. *I will cry unto God, &c.*] The Bible Version is in the past tense. “I cried unto the Lord with my voice, even unto God with my voice ; and He gave ear unto me.”

2. *My sore ran*] Anguish of heart is compared to a festering wound or ulcer, but the meaning seems to be, My hand was stretched out incessantly in prayer.

3. *I will think upon God, &c.*] “I remembered God, and was troubled : I complained (*i.e.* uttered my plaint), and my spirit was overwhelmed.” See Job xxxv. 10.

4. *Thou holdest mine eyes, &c.*]

5 I have considered the days of old : and the years that are past.

6 I call to remembrance my song : and in the night I commune with mine own heart, and search out my spirits.

7 Will the Lord absent Himself for ever : and will He be no more intreated ?

8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever : and is his promise come utterly to an end for evermore ?

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious : and will He shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure ?

10 And I said, It is mine own infirmity : but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest.

11 I will remember the works of the Lord : and call to mind thy wonders of old time.

12 I will think also of all thy works : and my talking shall be of thy doings.

13 Thy way, O God, is holy : who is so great a God as our God ?

14 Thou art the God that doeth wonders : and hast declared thy power among the people.

15 Thou hast mightily delivered thy people : even the sons of Jacob and Joseph.

16 The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee, and were afraid : the depths also were troubled.

Thou didst keep mine eyes from sleep: I was so troubled that I could not speak.

6. *My song, &c.*] The verse is better divided in the Bible Version, where the first clause is, "I call to remembrance my song in the night." *My song* is the song of praise which I once sung for benefits conferred in former days. See Job xxxv. 10.

— *Search out my spirits*] Examine my secret thoughts and feelings,—search into my very soul.

7. *Absent Himself, &c.*] See Ps.

lxxiv. 1. The Bible Version is, "Will the Lord cast off for ever?"

10. *The years of the right hand, &c.*] The years wherein Jehovah manifested the victorious strenth of his right hand in the frequent deliverance of his people. Compare vv. 5, 11, 15.

12. *My talking shall be, &c.*] Compare Deut. vi. 7.

14. *The people*] That is, the surrounding nations.

15—20] These verses plainly refer to the signs and wonders

17 The clouds poured out water, the air thundered : and thine arrows went abroad.

18 The voice of thy thunder was heard round about : the lightnings shone upon the ground ; the earth was moved, and shook withal.

19 Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters : and thy footsteps are not known.

20 Thou leddest thy people like sheep : by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Evening.]

PSALM LXXVIII.

[*Day 15.*

GOD'S MIGHTY WORKS FOR HIS PEOPLE OF OLD.

HEAR my law, O my people : incline your ears unto the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable : I will declare hard sentences of old ;

3 Which we have heard and known : and such as our fathers have told us ;

4 That we should not hide them from the children of the generations to come : but to shew the honour of the Lord, his mighty and wonderful works that He hath done.

wrought by God in Egypt for the deliverance of his chosen people. Compare Exod. ix. 22—25.

18. *Round about*] or, In the whirlwind.

— *Shone upon the ground*] “Lightened the world.”

Ps. LXXVIII. was written by Asaph the Seer, who lived in the time of David. It contains a summary of God's miraculous dealings with his people, from the time of Moses ; and its main object is to warn Israel not to provoke a fresh judgment, by a fresh rebellion and apostasy.

2. *I will declare hard sentences of old*] I will utter wise sentences

from of old ; that is, lessons from Jewish history, which were written for the instruction and warning of all future generations. The events narrated were types or examples of things which were to happen in later ages of the Church ; and as these dealings of God with his ancient people conveyed instructions which it required wisdom and sagacity to extract and apply to later times and circumstances, they had the character of parables. The words are quoted by the Evangelist St. Matthew as receiving a more exact fulfilment in the parables of our Saviour. See Matt. xiii. 35 ; Mark iv. 33, 34.

5 He made a covenant with Jacob, and gave Israel a law : which He commanded our forefathers to teach their children ;

6 That their posterity might know it : and the children which were yet unborn ;

7 To the intent that when they came up : they might shew their children the same ;

8 That they might put their trust in God : and not to forget the works of God, but to keep his commandments ;

9 And not to be as their forefathers, a faithless and stubborn generation : a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit cleaveth not stedfastly unto God ;

10 Like as the children of Ephraim : who being harnessed, and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle.

11 They kept not the covenant of God : and would not walk in his law ;

12 But forgot what He had done : and the wonderful works that He had shewed for them.

13 Marvellous things did He in the sight of our forefathers in the land of Egypt : even in the field of Zoan.

14 He divided the sea, and let them go through : He made the waters to stand on an heap.

5. *To teach their children, &c.*] Referring to the commandments and statutes which he had given to the Jews, Moses enjoins as follows: 'Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.' Deut. vi. 7, and xi. 19.

10. *Like as the children of Ephraim*] Ephraim, the principal tribe, is here put for the whole of Israel;

and the charge against the people is, that they shrunk from executing the commands of Jehovah, and, like well-armed warriors flying in fear from the enemy, deserted the post which the Almighty had assigned to them.

13. *The field of Zoan*] Zoan was one of the oldest cities of Lower Egypt. Numb. xiii. 22. It was also one of the principal capitals of the Pharaohs. Isa. xix. 11, 13; xxx. 4.

15 In the day-time also He led them with a cloud : and all the night through with a light of fire.

16 He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness : and gave them drink thereof, as it had been out of the great depth.

17 He brought waters out of the stony rock : so that it gushed out like the rivers.

18 Yet for all this they sinned more against Him : and provoked the most Highest in the wilderness.

19 They tempted God in their hearts : and required meat for their lust.

20 They spake against God also, saying : ' Shall God prepare a table in the wilderness ?

21 He smote the stony rock indeed, that the water gushed out, and the streams flowed withal : but can He give bread also, or provide flesh for his people ?'

22 When the Lord heard this, He was wroth : so the fire was kindled in Jacob, and there came up heavy displeasure against Israel ;

23 Because they believed not in God : and put not their trust in his help.

24 So He commanded the clouds above : and opened the doors of heaven.

14—54] For the historical events which are commemorated in these verses, the reader is referred to Exod. vii. xvii. ; Numb. xi. xvi. xx. xxi. xxv. ; and Deut. viii. ix.

16. *The great depth*] In more modern English, The great deep ; that is, the ocean.

17. *Waters out of the stony rock*] The rock is a type of Christ, who was smitten for us, and the gushing waters, of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. ' They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.' 1 Cor. x. 4.

19. *Required meat for their lust*] *Meat*, in the language of Scripture, means not flesh, but food in

general. The offence of the faithless Israelites was, that instead of trusting in Jehovah to provide for their wants, they demanded the particular food which they had a fancy for.

20. *Prepare a table, &c.*] "Furnish a table;" that is, provide food. Ps. xxiii. 5. The question was asked in a scornful spirit of unbelief, notwithstanding the many miracles which they had witnessed. The reader will be reminded of the miracle by which our Lord fed vast multitudes 'in a desert place.' Mark viii. 1 ; Luke ix. 12.

22. *So the fire was kindled in Jacob*] That is, God's fiery indignation.

25 He rained down manna also upon them for to eat : and gave them food from heaven.

26 So man did eat angels' food : for He sent them meat enough.

27 He caused the east wind to blow under heaven : and through his power he brought in the south-west wind.

28 He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust : and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea.

29 He let it fall among their tents : even round about their habitation.

30 So they did eat, and were well filled ; for He gave them their own desire : they were not disappointed of their lust.

31 But while the meat was yet in their mouths, the heavy wrath of God came upon them, and slew the wealthiest of them : yea, and smote down the chosen men that were in Israel.

32 But for all this they sinned yet more : and believed not his wondrous works.

33 Therefore their days did He consume in vanity : and their years in trouble.

34 When He slew them, they sought Him : and turned them early, and enquired after God.

35 And they remembered that God was their strength : and that the high God was their Redeemer.

tion was excited against his people. 'The anger of the Lord was kindled greatly.' Numb. xi. 10.

25. *Food from heaven*] "The corn of heaven."

26. *Angels' food*] The manna which was rained down upon the Israelites, is shown by our Lord himself to be a type of Him who was the true bread which came down from heaven. See John vi. 31-35, 48-51.

— *Meat enough*] Food to the full.

31. *The wealthiest*] The strongest and most vigorous. *Wealth* is the old word for well-being; thus

in the Litany we pray for deliverance 'in all time of our *wealth*.' See Ps. lxxix. 23, and note.

31. *The chosen men*] The picked or *choice* youths.

33. *Their days did He consume in vanity, &c.*] That is, in weary marches backwards and forwards in the wilderness, during a space of forty years, and in vain longings to enter into the Land of Promise.

34. *When He slew them, &c.*] God's severe judgments produced a short repentance. Numb. xxi. 6, 7.

— *Early*] Or, as we now say, earnestly.

36 Nevertheless, they did but flatter Him with their mouth : and dissembled with Him in their tongue.

37 For their heart was not whole with Him : neither continued they stedfast in his covenant.

38 But He was so merciful, that He forgave their misdeeds : and destroyed them not.

39 Yea, many a time turned He his wrath away : and would not suffer his whole displeasure to arise.

40 For He considered that they were but flesh : and that they were even a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

41 Many a time did they provoke Him in the wilderness : and grieved Him in the desert.

42 They turned back, and tempted God : and moved the Holy One in Israel.

43 They thought not of his hand : and of the day when He delivered them from the hand of the enemy ;

44 How He had wrought his miracles in Egypt : and his wonders in the field of Zoan.

45 He turned their waters into blood : so that they might not drink of the rivers.

46 He sent lice among them, and devoured them up : and frogs to destroy them.

47 He gave their fruit unto the caterpillar : and their labour unto the grasshopper.

48 He destroyed their vines with hail-stones : and their mulberry-trees with the frost.

49 He smote their cattle also with hail-stones : and their flocks with hot thunder-bolts.

50 He cast upon them the furiousness of his wrath,

36. *Dissembled, &c.*] “Lied unto Him.” Played the hypocrite.

40. *Were but flesh*] Mere frail and mortal men. Compare Isa. xl. 6.

42. *They turned back, and tempted God*] They returned again and again to the sins and unbelief by which they provoked God’s anger.

— *And moved*] Or perhaps dishonoured Him.

45. *Their waters*] The Psalmist turns now from God’s merciful forbearance to the Israelites, to speak of his judgments upon the Egyptians,—on *their* rivers, *their* fields, *their* cattle, &c.]

47. *The grasshopper*] “The locust.” See Exod. x. 13—15, for an account of the plague of locusts.

48. *Their mulberry-trees*] Prov.

anger, displeasure, and trouble : and sent evil angels among them.

51 He made a way to his indignation, and spared not their soul from death : but gave their life over to the pestilence ;

52 And smote all the first-born in Egypt : the most principal and mightiest in the dwellings of Ham.

53 But as for his own people, He led them forth like sheep : and carried them in the wilderness like a flock.

54 He brought them out safely, that they should not fear ; and overwhelmed their enemies with the sea.

55 And brought them within the borders of his sanctuary : even to his mountain which He purchased with his right hand.

56 He cast out the heathen also before them : caused their land to be divided among them for an heritage, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

57 So they tempted, and displeased the most high God : and kept not his testimonies ;

58 But turned their backs, and fell away like their forefathers : starting aside like a broken bow.

59 For they grieved Him with their hill-altars : and provoked Him to displeasure with their images.

perly, as in Bible Version, "their sycamore trees."

50. *Evil angels*] Not bad angels, but angels to execute his chastisements on the wicked and rebellious. Some think that by evil angels are meant the various plagues and judgments which were the means and instruments of God's vengeance.

51. *He made a way, &c.*] That is, He gave free course to his wrath.

52. *The most principal, &c.*] "The chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham." Egypt is called the land of Ham, because it was peopled by the descendants of Ham, Noah's second son. Ps. cv. 23, 27; svi. 22,

53. *Carried them*] "Guided them."

55. *His sanctuary*] The Holy Land, in which his sanctuary was established.

56. *For an heritage*] For the division of Canaan among the tribes of Israel, see Joshua xiii. 7; xix. 51.

57. *So they tempted*] "Yet they tempted." They went on tempting God.

58. *A broken bow*] A faulty bow that swerves and baulks the aim of the marksman.

59. *Hill-altars*] Altars set upon high places for the worship of their idols. Refer to Jer. xvii. 2; Ezek. xx. 28.

60 When God heard this, He was wroth : and took sore displeasure at Israel.

61 So that He forsook the tabernacle in Silo : even the tent that He had pitched among men.

62 He delivered their power into captivity : and their beauty into the enemy's hand.

63 He gave his people over also unto the sword : and was wroth with his inheritance.

64 The fire consumed their young men : and their maidens were not given to marriage.

65 Their priests were slain with the sword : and there were no widows to make lamentation.

66 So the Lord awaked as one out of sleep : and like a giant refreshed with wine.

67 He smote his enemies in the hinder parts : and put them to a perpetual shame.

68 He refused the tabernacle of Joseph : and chose not the tribe of Ephraim ;

69 But chose the tribe of Judah : even the hill of Sion which He loved.

70 And there He built his temple on high : and

61. *The tabernacle in Silo*] God in his anger permitted his ark, which had been established at Shiloh, to be captured by the Philistines. 1 Sam. iv. 3—11. 'But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.' Jer. vii. 12.

62. *Their power...their beauty*] The ark, the symbol of Divine power and glory, is meant.

64. *The fire*] The flames of war, the fire of battle. Compare Deut. xxxii. 22.

— *Were not given to marriage*] Or, were not praised in bridal songs.

65. *Their priests were slain*] Alluding, perhaps, to the death of Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of

Eli, and probably also to other priests, who were slain at the time when the ark was taken by the Philistines. 1 Sam. iv. 11.

There were no widows, &c.] "their widows made no lamentation."

67. *He smote his enemies, &c.*] Or, He drove back his enemies. The allusion is probably to the ignominious defeat of the Philistines, as described 1 Sam. vii. 10—14.

68, 69. *He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, &c.*] The precedence was transferred from Ephraim to Judah. When the ark was brought up from Kirjath-Jearim, where it had been kept by the Philistines for 100 years, it was not taken to Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim, but to Mount Zion. 1 Sam. vi. 21 ; 1 Chron. xv. 25—29.

laid the foundation of it like the ground which He hath made continually.

71 He chose David also his servant : and took him away from the sheep-folds.

72 As he was following the ewes great with young ones He took him : that he might feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

73 So he fed them with a faithful and true heart : and ruled them prudently with all his power.

Morning.]

PSALM LXXIX.

[*Day 16.*]

A PEOPLE'S LAMENTATION AND CRY FOR HELP.

O GOD, the heathen are come into thine inheritance : thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones.

2 The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air : and the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the land.

3 Their blood have they shed like water on every side of Jerusalem : and there was no man to bury them.

4 We are become an open shame to our enemies : a very scorn and derision unto them that are round about us.

5 Lord, how long wilt Thou be angry : shall thy jealousy burn like fire for ever ?

70. *Hath made continually*] Hath fixed on a secure foundation, so as to *continue* or stand for ever. Psalm xlviii. 7. When the headship of the tribes of Israel was taken from Ephraim and given to Judah, God decreed that instead of the moveable tabernacle of Shiloh, a glorious temple should be erected on Mount Zion, as the permanent resting place of the ark. For the account of the building of the Temple see 1 Kings vi.

71. *He chose David, &c.*] See 150

1 Sam. xvi. 11, 12; 2 Sam. vii. 8.

73. *And ruled them prudently*] 'Yea, He guided them with a skilful hand.'

Ps. LXXIX. refers to the same national disasters as the seventy-fourth; the invasion of the Chaldeans, the capture of Jerusalem, and the desecration and destruction of the Temple.

1. *Thine inheritance*] The land of Canaan, which was allotted by God as an inheritance to his people.

6 Pour out thine indignation upon the heathen that have not known Thee : and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy Name.

7 For they have devoured Jacob : and laid waste his dwelling-place.

8 O remember not our old sins, but have mercy upon us, and that soon : for we are come to great misery.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy Name : O deliver us, and be merciful unto our sins, for thy Name's sake.

10 Wherefore do the heathen say : 'Where is now their God ?'

11 O let the vengeance of thy servants' blood that is shed : be openly shewed upon the heathen in our sight.

12 O let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before Thee : according to the greatness of thy power, preserve Thou those that are appointed to die.

13 And for the blasphemy wherewith our neighbours have blasphemed Thee : reward Thou them, O Lord, seven-fold into their bosom.

14 So we, that are thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, shall give Thee thanks for ever : and will

6. *Pour out thine indignation, &c.*] God's judgments are here invoked, not against all heathen nations generally, but upon those which, defying his power, had carried on a desolating war against his people Israel. Verses 6 and 7 are found almost word for word in Jer. x. 25.

8. *Our old sins*] That is, the iniquities of our forefathers, as well as our own in past times. In like manner we pray in the Litany, 'Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers.'

10. *Wherefore do the heathen say, &c.*] The prophet Joel, calling the people to repentance, bids them plead with God not to suffer the heathen to rule over them, and so

give them occasion to ask reproachfully. "Where is now your God?" Ps. xlii. 3; Joel ii. 17.

12. *Of the prisoners*] The Israelites were at this time groaning beneath the hard rule of their Chaldean invaders, and were, it may be said, in bondage to them. For the barbarous treatment to which they were subjected, see Lam. v. 12, 13.

— *Appointed to die*] Doomed, or given over to death.

13. *Reward Thou them, &c.*] Repay them manifold the reproaches they have cast upon Thee; as when they tauntingly asked, "Where is their God?" ver. 10. See Lam. iii. 64.

always be shewing forth thy praise from generation to generation.

PSALM LXXX.

THE VINE TRANSPLANTED FROM EGYPT.

HEAR, O Thou Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep : shew thyself also, Thou that sittest upon the cherubims.

2 Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses : stir up thy strength, and come and help us.

3 Turn us again, O God : shew the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

4 O Lord God of hosts : how long wilt Thou be angry with thy people that prayeth ?

5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears : and givest them plenteousness of tears to drink.

6 Thou hast made us a very strife unto our neighbours : and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Ps. LXXX. was written probably after the captivity of the ten tribes. Note the prayer thrice repeated, 'Turn us again,' or more correctly, 'Restore us,' at vv. 3, 7, 19. The whole Psalm is an earnest prayer for the restoration of God's favour to his suffering and persecuted people; whose past privileges and present desolation are described under the figure of a vine, fenceless and open to the ravages of the beasts of the field.

1. *O Thou Shepherd of Israel*] The benediction of the dying Jacob on his son Joseph seems here alluded to. See Gen. xlix. 24.

— *Thou that leadest Joseph, &c.*] Thou that leadest the Israelites, descendants of Joseph, like a flock of sheep.

— *Shew thyself*] "Shine forth."

— *Thou that sittest upon the cherubims*] "Thou that dwellest between the cherubims." The Cherubim were winged figures placed on

each end of the "mercy-seat"—which was the covering of the ark—with their wings outspread, and their faces turned to each other, looking down towards the ark. Between them and over the mercy-seat Jehovah vouchsafed his presence in an especial manner, and so He is said to dwell between the cherubims. Exod. xxv. 22; Numb. vii. 89; 2 Sam. vi. 2; 2 Kings xix. 15; Ps. xcix. 1.

2. *Before Ephraim, &c.*] In the order of march through the wilderness, these three tribes followed next after the Ark, Numb. ii. 18—22; and the prayer is, that God will manifest his presence in like manner now, to confound their enemies, and deliver his own people.

5. *The bread of tears, &c.*] The same figure is used Ps. xlii. 3, "My tears have been my meat day and night."

6. *A very strife*] A cause of contention.

7 Turn us again, Thou God of hosts : shew the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt : Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou madest room for it : and when it had taken root it filled the land.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it : and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar-trees.

11 She stretched out her branches unto the sea : and her boughs unto the river.

12 Why hast Thou then broken down her hedge : that all they that go by pluck off her grapes ?

13 The wild boar out of the wood doth root it up : and the wild beasts of the field devour it.

14 Turn Thee again, Thou God of hosts ; look down from heaven : behold, and visit this vine ;

15 And the place of the vineyard that thy right hand hath planted : and the branch that Thou madest so strong for thyself.

16 It is burnt with fire, and cut down : and they shall perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

8. *A vine out of Egypt*] The people of Israel, in this Psalm, are beautifully compared with a luxuriant and spreading vine, transplanted from Egypt to Palestine. The vine which God planted in Canaan is a type of the Christian Church. Compare Isa. v. 1—7.

9. *Madest room for it*] Clearedst ground for it.

11. *Her branches unto the sea, &c.*] The kingdom of Israel, in the reign of Solomon, extended from the river Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea.

13. *The wild boar, &c.*] The 'wild boar,' and the 'wild beasts,' are the fierce enemies of Israel; the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, &c. Under this image, too, are foretold the furious assaults to which the Christian Church in

after ages would be exposed from its enemies and persecutors.

15. *The place of the vineyard, &c.*] Rather,—Even the plant or stock which thy right hand hath planted.

— *The branch*] In Hebrew,—The Son. The Branch of the heavenly vine may refer to the family of David, the anointed kings and leaders of God's people; but it must surely point to that Son of David who is frequently foretold by the prophets under the image of a Branch. Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxxiii. 5.

16. *They shall perish*] *They*, thy people,—the plant and branches of the true vine will perish, unless thy hand be stretched forth to defend and save them.

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand : and upon the son of man, whom Thou madest so strong for thine own self.

18 And so will not we go back from Thee : O let us live, and we shall call upon thy Name.

19 Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts : shew the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

PSALM LXXXI.

GOD'S EXPOSTULATION WITH HIS PEOPLE.

SING we merrily unto God our strength : make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob.

2 Take the psalm, bring hither the tabret : the merry harp with the lute.

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon : even in the time appointed, and upon our solemn feast-day.

4 For this was made a statute for Israel : and a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony : when he came out of the land of Egypt, and had heard a strange language.

17. *The man of thy right hand and the Son of man* denote the same Person as *The Branch*, v. 15 ; and make it more clear that all these descriptions refer, in a spiritual and prophetic sense, to the Messiah : that 'Son of man, who sitteth at the right hand of God.'

18. *Will not we go back, &c.*] Will not we any more turn aside from the worship of Jehovah to serve the false gods of the heathen.

In Ps. LXXXI. the people are exhorted to celebrate one of their national festivals—probably either the passover, or the feast of trumpets (Lev. xxiii. 24)—with songs and musical instruments, in accordance

with the law given them by Moses. The Almighty reminds the Israelites of the wonders which he had wrought for them in the old time, reproves them for their ingratitude, and pictures the happy condition which they would have attained had they continued steadfast in the way of his commandments.

3. *Blow up the trumpet, &c.*] By the requirement of the Jewish law, solemn feasts, and new moons, were to be ushered in by the sound of the trumpet. See Numb. x. 2.

5. *In Joseph*] For the children or descendants of Joseph.

— *For a testimony, &c.*] As an evidence and memorial of God's mercy.

6 'I eased his shoulder from the burden : and his hands were delivered from making the pots.

7 Thou calledst upon me in troubles, and I delivered thee : and heard thee what time as the storm fell upon thee.

8 I proved thee also : at the waters of strife.

9 Hear, O my people, and I will assure thee, O Israel : if thou wilt hearken unto me,

10 There shall no strange God be in thee : neither shalt thou worship any other god.

11 I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt : open thy mouth wide, and I shall fill it.

12 But my people would not hear my voice : and Israel would not obey me.

13 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts : and let them follow their own imaginations.

14 O that my people would have hearkened unto me : for if Israel had walked in my ways,

15 I should soon have put down their enemies : and turned my hand against their adversaries.

16 The haters of the Lord should have been found liars : but their time should have endured for ever.

6. *I eased his shoulder from the burden*] In these words, to the end of the Psalm, Jehovah the Lord himself speaks.

7. *And heard thee what time as the storm fell upon thee*] "I answered thee in the secret place of thunder;" or, under cover of the thunder cloud. See Ps. xviii. 11. The allusion may be to the voice of Jehovah from the cloudy pillar, or to the commandments which He gave from the midst of the thick darkness on Mount Sinai. See Exod. xx. 18, 19, and Ps. xcix. 7: 'He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar.'

8. *The waters of strife*] or, The waters of Meribah, a name signifying

strife; where the people, suffering from thirst, and finding no water, broke out into impatient complaints against Moses. See Exod. xvii. 2.

10. *No strange god*] No idol such as foreign nations worshipped. Dent. xxxii. 12; Isa. xliii. 12.

11. *Shall fill it*] Will abundantly supply all that thou canst desire.

16. *Should have been found liars*] "Should have submitted themselves unto Him;" or should feign submission. Dent. xxxiii. 29; Ps. lxvi. 2.

— *Their time*] That is, the time of his own people, the period of their prosperity, should have continued without interruption.

17 He should have fed them also with the finest wheat flour : and with honey out of the stony rock should I have satisfied thee.'

Evening.]

PSALM LXXXII.

[Day 16.

GOD'S ADMONITION TO UNJUST JUDGES.

GOD standeth in the congregation of princes : He is a Judge among gods.

2 'How long will ye give wrong judgment : and accept the persons of the ungodly ?

3 Defend the poor and fatherless : see that such as are in need and necessity have right.

4 Deliver the outcast and poor : save them from the hand of the ungodly.'

5 They will not be learned nor understand, but walk on still in darkness : all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

6 'I have said, Ye are gods : and ye are all the children of the most Highest.

17. *Honey out of the stony rock, &c.*] I would have brought not water, but honey, out of the bare rock, to satisfy thy wants. See Deut. xxxii. 13 ; 1 Sam. xiv. 25.

Ps. LXXXII.—The most high God is introduced as solemnly warning all who exercise authority over others, or minister justice, that they are responsible to Him, the Great Judge of all ; and as reminding them that, however exalted their present position, they must soon be reduced by death to the level of the lowest.

1. *The congregation of princes*] or, The assembly of the mighty. Compare Isa. iii. 14 : 'The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof.'

1. *He is a Judge among gods*] God is Supreme Head over every assembly of his people, whoever is the earthly president. He pronounceth sentence upon the judges and magistrates, who are called gods, as being God's ministers, and as speaking in his name. Isa. iii. 13, 14.

2—4] These verses contain God's expostulation and charge.

5. *They will not be learned*] The judges do not seek to acquire a knowledge of the law, but are content to go on blindly and ignorantly in their old corrupt ways.

— *All the foundations of the earth*] That is, the principles of law and justice, which are the foundations of all government, are shaken.

6. *I have said, Ye are gods*] I did, indeed, say, Ye are gods ; that

7 But ye shall die like men : and fall like one of the princes.'

8 Arise, O God, and judge Thou the earth : for Thou shalt take all heathen to thine inheritance.

PSALM LXXXIII.

PRAYER AGAINST THE CONFEDERATE NATIONS.

HOLD not thy tongue, O God ; keep not still silence : refrain not thyself, O God.

2 For lo, thine enemies make a murmuring : and they that hate Thee have lift up their head.

3 They have imagined craftily against thy people : and taken counsel against thy secret ones.

4 They have said, 'Come, and let us root them out, that they be no more a people : and that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.'

5 For they have cast their heads together with one consent : and are confederate against Thee ;

6 The tabernacles of the Edomites, and the Ismaelites : the Moabites, and Hagarens ;

is, I have admitted and proclaimed your authority and commission as my representatives.

7. *Ye shall die, &c.*] You are not secured against the common lot of men, but shall die like others.

Ps. LXXXIII. was probably written during the war of Jehoshaphat, (2 Chron. xx. ; Ps. xxvii. 5,) about the year B.C. 896, as an appeal to God against a powerful combination of enemies.

2. *Make a murmuring*] "Make a tumult." See Ps. lxxiv. 3 ; Isa. v. 30.

3. *Have imagined craftily*] Have laid cunning plots.

— *Thy secret ones*] Those cherished ones who are kept in safety under the cover of thy protection. Ps. xxvii. 5.

5. *Confederate*] Bound together in a covenant or treaty.

6. *The tabernacles, &c.*] The tabernacles, or tents, stand for the tribes to which they belonged.

— *The Edomites, &c.*] The Edomites were descendants of Esau. Gen. xxv. 30. They occupied the mountainous region to the south of the Dead Sea, and were the bitter enemies of Israel.

— *The Ismaelites* were the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham's bondwoman, and dwelt in the desert of Arabia, to the east and south-east of the Holy Land.

— *The Moabites*, whose country was to the east of the Dead Sea, sprang from Moab, a son of Lot, born in sin.

— *The Hagarens* came of other sons of Hagar.

7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek : the Philistines, with them that dwell at Tyre.

8 Assur also is joined with them : and have holpen the children of Lot.

9 But do Thou to them as unto the Madianites : unto Sisera, and unto Jabin at the brook of Kison ;

10 Who perished at Endor : and became as the dung of the earth.

11 Make them and their princes like Oreb and Zeb : yea, make all their princes like as Zeba and Salmana ;

12 Who say, 'Let us take to ourselves : the houses of God in possession.'

13 O my God, make them like unto a wheel : and as the stubble before the wind ;

14 Like as the fire that burneth up the wood : and as the flame that consumeth the mountains.

15 Persecute them even so with thy tempest : and make them afraid with thy storm.

7. *Gebal*] Probably a district of Idumæa, the same as is now called Djebel, but perhaps the country of the Giblites, mentioned in Josh. xiii. 5. The tribe of *Ammon*, the brother of Moab, inhabited the country on the eastern borders of Gad and Reuben. *Amalek*, the grandson of Esau, was the founder of the Amalekites, Gen. xxx. 16, who dwelt 'in the land of the south,' Numb. xiii. 29, between Idumæa and Egypt. The prophet Amos (i. 8—10) denounces God's judgments against the *Philistines* and *Tyrus* for their hostility to Israel. See also Joel iii. 4—8.

8. *Assur*] The Assyrians also are joined with them, and become allies to the children of Lot, namely to the Moabites and Ammonites, descendants of Moab and Ammon, the incestuous children of Lot.

9. *The Madianites—Sisera, &c.*] Refer to Judges vii. 23—25 ; and

iv. 15—24.

10. *Endor*] This place is not named in the book of Judges, but was probably the site of the battle which was fought in the valley of Kishon. Judges iv. 13.

— *Dung of the earth*] Whose corpses mouldering became as dung to manure and fertilise the soil.

11. *Like Oreb and Zeb, &c.*] Oreb and Zeeb, the commanders of the Midianites, and Zeba and Zalmunna, their kings, were defeated and slain by Gideon. See Judges vii. 25 ; viii. 12—21.

12. *The houses of God*] The dwellings of the people of God.

13. *Make them like unto a wheel*] Rather, like chaff whirled round by the wind. Isa. xviii. 18.

14. *The mountains*] The forests on the mountains' sides.

15. *Persecute them with thy tempest, &c.*] Pursue and overtake them with thy fierce judgments.

16 Make their faces ashamed, O Lord : that they may seek thy Name.

17 Let them be confounded and vexed ever more and more : let them be put to shame, and perish.

18 And they shall know that Thou, whose Name is Jehovah : art only the most Highest over all the earth.

PSALM LXXXIV.

THE EXILE'S LONGING FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD.

O HOW amiable are thy dwellings : Thou Lord of hosts !

2 My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

3 Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young : even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house : they will be always praising Thee.

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee : in whose heart are thy ways ;

6 Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well : and the pools are filled with water.

In Ps. LXXXIV. the loyal and ardent affection which the true Israelite bore to the courts of the Lord's house is described in language of the most touching beauty and simplicity. This Psalm, which bears a striking resemblance in its subject and spirit to Psalms xlii. xliii. is ascribed to the sons of Korah ; and may have been written while, with David, they were deprived of the privilege of the Temple service, during the rebellion of Absalom.

1. *How amiable*] How lovely is thy dwelling-place ; the Temple and the mercy-seat.

5. *In whose heart are thy ways*]

That is, Who love the ways that lead to thy house.

6, 7 *Who going through the vale of misery, &c.*] Whose journey, though it be through a barren and thirsty land, becomes to their minds pleasant and refreshing (see Isa. xxxv. 7) from the thought of the home to which it leads—a thought which gives them daily new strength—till at last they are enabled to present themselves every one before God their Lord, in his Temple at Jerusalem. In like manner, blessed is the Christian pilgrim who, by looking up in faith to Him who is gone before, turns the trials and afflictions of this vale of tears into

7. They will go from strength to strength : and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.

8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer : hearken, O God of Jacob.

9 Behold, O God our defender : and look upon the face of thine Anointed.

10 For one day in thy courts : is better than a thousand.

11 I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God : than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.

12 For the Lord God is a light and defence : the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall He withhold from them that live a godly life.

13 O Lord God of hosts ; blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Thee.

PSALM LXXXV.

TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL REDEMPTION.

Proper Psalm for Christmas Day.

LORD, Thou art become gracious unto thy land : Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob.

2 Thou hast forgiven the offence of thy people : and covered all their sins.

3 Thou hast taken away all thy displeasure : and turned thyself from thy wrathful indignation.

4 Turn us then, O God our Saviour : and let thine anger cease from us.

the means of spiritual strength and comfort.

10. *Better than a thousand*] That is, of course, than a thousand days spent elsewhere.

11. *Rather be a door-keeper, &c.*] Rather lie humbly at the outer door of God's house, than be a pampered guest in the house of the ungodly. See Acts iii. 2.

12. *Worship*] Honour and glory. See note on Ps. iii. 3.

Ps. LXXXV.—God is earnestly entreated for his chosen people in consideration of his past mercies to them, especially in bringing back the captive children of Judah to their own land. See Ezra i. ii.

1. *Turned away the captivity of Jacob*] That is, brought back the captive sons of Jacob. See Ezra i. ii.

4. *Turn us, &c.*] Turn us to thy way, and restore to us thy favour.

5 Wilt Thou be displeased at us for ever : and wilt Thou stretch out thy wrath from one generation to another ?

6 Wilt Thou not turn again, and quicken us : that thy people may rejoice in Thee ?

7 Shew us thy mercy, O Lord : and grant us thy salvation.

8 I will hearken what the Lord God will say concerning me : for He shall speak peace unto his people, and to his saints, that they turn not again.

9 For his salvation is nigh them that fear Him : that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together : righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall flourish out of the earth : and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

12 Yea, the Lord shall shew loving-kindness : and our land shall give her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before Him : and He shall direct his going in the way.

5. *Wilt Thou stretch out, &c.*] Wilt Thou extend, or continue thy anger, &c.

6. *Wilt Thou not turn again, and quicken us*] Wilt Thou not revive us again after we have been, in a manner, dead through thy displeasure ?

7. *Shew us thy mercy, &c.*] This verse supplies the well-known petitions at Morning and Evening Prayer :

‘O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

‘And grant us thy salvation.’

8. *That they turn not again*] that is, to idolatry and disobedience ; or, as in the Bib. Ver. “to folly.”

9. *That glory*] The light of

God’s countenance and favour : prophetically, the glory foretold by Haggai ii. 7—9 ; the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John i. 14.

10—12. *Mercy and truth are met together, &c.*] This combination of God’s love and faithfulness may apply to certain temporal deliverances, but was most fully manifested when the Son of God ‘became flesh, and dwelt among us.’

13. *Righteousness shall go before Him, &c.*] The meaning of this difficult verse may probably be as follows :—Righteousness shall go before Him (Jehovah), and shall make His footsteps a pathway for his servants to walk in.

Morning.]

PSALM LXXXVI.

[*Day 17.*

PRAYER IN TROUBLE AND DISTRESS.

BOW down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me : for I am poor, and in misery.

2 Preserve Thou my soul, for I am holy : my God, save thy servant that putteth his trust in Thee.

3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord : for I will call daily upon Thee.

4 Comfort the soul of thy servant : for unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious : and of great mercy unto all them that call upon Thee.

6 Give ear, Lord, unto my prayer : and ponder the voice of my humble desires.

7 In the time of my trouble I will call upon Thee : for Thou hearest me.

8 Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord : there is not one that can do as Thou doest.

9 All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship Thee, O Lord : and shall glorify thy name.

10 For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things : Thou art God alone.

11 Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth : O knit my heart unto Thee, that I may fear thy Name.

Ps. LXXXVI.—“A Prayer of David,” grounded on the assurance that God will hear the cry of his true servants in distress. It is, therefore, a prayer which may well be used by all who put their trust in his mercy. The Psalm contains (vv. 8, 9) an acknowledgment of God’s Almighty Power, and a prophecy of the conversion of all nations to the true faith.

2. *For I am holy*] I am ‘thy servant,’ as at ver. 16, and cxvi. 16. The expression is equivalent to that

in Ps. cxix. 94: ‘I am thine, O save me :’ and means, I am devoted to thy service ; a worshipper of Thee, the true God, not of any of the gods of the heathen.

6. *Ponder*] Weigh, consider.

8. *Among the gods*] Among those who are falsely regarded and worshipped as gods by the heathen.

9. *All nations, &c.*] A time is foreseen when all the heathen shall enter into his temple, the Christian Church, and worship the true God.

12 I will thank Thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart : and will praise thy Name for evermore.

13 For great is thy mercy toward me : and Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell.

14 O God, the proud are risen against me : and the congregations of naughty men have sought after my soul, and have not set Thee before their eyes.

15 But Thou, O Lord God, art full of compassion and mercy : long-suffering, plenteous in goodness and truth.

16 O turn Thee then unto me, and have mercy upon me : give thy strength unto thy servant, and help the son of thine handmaid.

17 Shew some token upon me for good, that they who hate me may see it, and be ashamed : because Thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

SION THE SPIRITUAL BIRTHPLACE OF ALL NATIONS.

HER foundations are upon the holy hills : the Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

2 Very excellent things are spoken of thee : thou city of God.

3 I will think upon Rahab and Babylon : with them that know me.

13. *From the nethermost hell*] From the pit beneath; *i.e.* from imminent peril of death.

14. *The congregations of naughty men*] "The assemblies of violent men."

— *Have sought after my soul*] Have conspired against my life.

Ps. LXXXVII. is a remarkable prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles to the true Religion, and of their admission into the Church of God.

1. *Her foundations*] more properly, "His Foundation;" meaning thereby the Temple itself, of which Jehovah was the Founder.

2. *Very excellent things, &c.*] For the praises of Jerusalem and the prophecies of her future glory, refer to Isa. xlix. ; lx. ; lxii. ; Jer. iii. 14—17; Ps. cxxii.

3. *I will think upon Rahab and Babylon, with them that know me*] More clearly, 'I (the Lord) will set down, or record, Egypt and Babylon, among those who know

4 Behold ye the Philistines also : and they of Tyre, with the Morians ; lo, there was he born.

5 And of Sion it shall be reported that he was born in her : and the most High shall stablish her.

6 The Lord shall rehearse it when He writeth up the people : that He was born there.

7 The singers also and trumpeters shall He rehearse : 'All my fresh springs shall be in Thee.'

PSALM LXXXVIII.

LAMENTATION OF A SORROWFUL AND AFFLICTED SPIRIT.

Proper Psalm for Good Friday.

O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before Thee : O let my prayer enter into thy presence, incline thine ear unto my calling.

2 For my soul is full of trouble : and my life draweth nigh unto hell.

3 I am counted as one of them that go down into

me;' in other words, the Egyptians and Babylonians shall be brought to a knowledge of the true God.

4. *Behold ye the Philistines also, &c.*] The Philistine, the Tyrian, and the Ethiopian, shall each of them be born there, *i. e.* become children of Sion.

5. *That he was born in her*] That this and that man—one man after another—was born in the city of Sion, and so was adopted into the family of God.

6. *The Lord shall rehearse it, &c.*] The Lord when He enrolleth the people shall declare, 'This man, too, was born there.' Mal. iii. 16 ; see also Rev. xx. 12.

7. *The singers also, &c.*] This obscure verse is more clearly rendered as follows: singing and dancing they shall say, 'All my

fountains [of joy and salvation] are in thee' [Sion]. Thus, with music and song, that is, with every token of satisfaction and delight, shall those who are born into the family of God celebrate his praise.

Ps. LXXXVIII.—This Psalm, which is one continued strain of mourning and dejection, without any light or relief, is applied by the Church to Him who is emphatically called the Man of Sorrows. Compare Ps. vi.

2. *Unto hell*] "Unto the grave." Call to mind the touching words of our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.' Matt. xvi. 38.

3. *I am counted*] I am looked upon as a man at the point of death.

the pit : and I have been even as a man that hath no strength.

4 Free among the dead, like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave : who are out of remembrance, and are cut away from thy hand.

5 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit : in a place of darkness, and in the deep.

6 Thine indignation lieth hard upon me : and Thou hast vexed me with all thy storms.

7 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me : and made me to be abhorred of them.

8 I am so fast in prison : that I cannot get forth.

9 My sight faileth for very trouble : Lord, I have called daily upon Thee ; I have stretched forth my hands unto Thee.

10 Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead : or shall the dead rise up again, and praise Thee ?

11 Shall thy loving-kindness be shewed in the grave : or thy faithfulness in destruction ?

12 Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark : and thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten ?

13 Unto Thee have I cried, O Lord : and early shall my prayer come before Thee.

14 Lord, why abhorrest Thou my soul : and hidest Thou thy face from me ?

4. *Free among the dead*] Cut off and cast away from the world, as though dead already.

— *Like unto them that are wounded*] “Like the slain that lie in the grave.”

6. *Thy storms*] Thy visitations, as pain, sickness, and sorrow.

7. *Thou hast put away mine acquaintance*] How true this was of Christ we read in St. Matt. xxvi. 56 ; St. Luke xxiii. 49.

8. *I am so fast in prison*] “I am shut up,” excluded from the

company of friends. Compare Job iii. 23 ; xix. 8 ; Lam. iii. 7.

9. *My sight faileth for very trouble*] “Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction.”

10—12. *Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead*] The urgent plea is, If I am to be delivered at all, it must be at once, as life is fast failing.

11. *Be shewed in the grave*] “Be declared,” or celebrated by the dead.

12. *Be known*] Be acknowledged.

15 I am in misery, and like unto him that is at the point to die : even from my youth up thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.

16 Thy wrathful displeasure goeth over me : and the fear of Thee hath undone me.

17 They came round about me daily like water : and compassed me together on every side.

18 My lovers and friends hast Thou put away from me : and hid mine acquaintance out of my sight.

Evening.]

PSALM LXXXIX.

[*Day 17.*

GOD'S COVENANTED MERCIES.

Proper Psalm for Christmas Day.

MY song shall be alway of the loving-kindness of the Lord : with my mouth will I ever be shewing thy truth from one generation to another.

2 For I have said, Mercy shall be set up for ever : thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the heavens.

3 'I have made a covenant with my chosen : I have sworn unto David my servant ;

4 'Thy seed will I stablish for ever : and set up thy throne from one generation to another.'

5 O Lord, the very heavens shall praise thy wondrous works : and thy truth in the congregation of the saints.

15. *I am in misery, &c.*] This verse is differently divided in the Bible Version, where we read, "I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up."

— *With a troubled mind*] With terror and distraction of mind.

18. *And hid mine acquaintance, &c.*] Rather, my acquaintanceship is darkness; that is, darkness is all I have to converse with; my circle of acquaintances is comprised in blank darkness.

Ps. LXXXIX.—In this Psalm are celebrated the mercy, faithful-

ness, and sovereign power of Jehovah. The promises made to David are to have their full accomplishment in Christ. Read in connexion with this Psalm, 2 Sam. vii. 4—17.

2. *Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the heavens*] Thou shalt fix thy word and promises as firmly and immovably as the heavens.

3, 4. *I have made a covenant, &c.*] These verses are put into the mouth of God, as containing the terms of his covenant with his servant David. See 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

5. *The very heavens, &c.*] See Ps. xix. 1; Rev. iv. 8—11.

6 For who is he among the clouds : that shall be compared unto the Lord ?

7 And what is he among the gods : that shall be like unto the Lord ?

8 God is very greatly to be feared in the council of the saints : and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about Him.

9 O Lord God of hosts, who is like unto Thee : thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.

10 Thou rulest the raging of the sea : Thou stillest the waves thereof when they arise.

11 Thou hast subdued Egypt, and destroyed it : Thou hast scattered thine enemies abroad with thy mighty arm.

12 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine : Thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is.

13 Thou hast made the north and the south : Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy Name.

14 Thou hast a mighty arm : strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

15 Righteousness and equity are the habitation of thy seat : mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

16 Blessed is the people, O Lord, that can rejoice in Thee : they shall walk in the light of thy countenance.

17 Their delight shall be daily in thy Name : and in thy righteousness shall they make their boast.

10. *The raging of the sea, &c.*] In this and the following verses Jehovah's almighty power is asserted as supreme alike over the works of creation, and the designs and actions of men and nations.

13. *Tabor and Hermon*] As Tabor was a mountain on the western, and Hermon on the eastern side of the Jordan, God is glorified as the creator of the whole world, north, south, east, and west.

15. *The habitation of thy seat*] Better, the basis of thy throne.

16. *That can rejoice in Thee*] Literally, as in Bib. Ver. "that know the joyful sound," that is, the clang of trumpets and the shouts of triumph by which the Israelites were invited to celebrate their holy festivals. Lev. xxiii. 24.

17. *Shall they make their boast*] "Shall they be exalted."

18 For Thou art the glory of their strength : and in thy loving-kindness Thou shalt lift up our horns.

19 For the Lord is our defence : the Holy One of Israel is our King.

20 Thou spakest sometime in visions unto thy saints, and saidst : 'I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

21 'I have found David my servant : with my holy oil have I anointed him.

22 'My hand shall hold him fast : and my arm shall strengthen him.

23 'The enemy shall not be able to do him violence : the son of wickedness shall not hurt him.

24 'I will smite down his foes before his face : and plague them that hate him.

25 'My truth also and my mercy shall be with him : and in my Name shall his horn be exalted.

26 'I will set his dominion also in the sea : and his right hand in the floods.

27 'He shall call me, Thou art my Father : my God, and my strong salvation.

18. *Lift up our horns*] Give us strength and power.

20. *Thou spakest sometime in visions, &c.*] In the First Book of Chronicles, ch. xvii. after God had promised to establish the throne of Solomon, and of his seed (that is, Christ) for ever, it is added, ver. 15, 'According to all this *vision* so did Nathan speak unto David.' Other revelations or visions to the saints of old will be found at 1 Sam. xvi. 1; 2 Sam. vii. 8—17.

— *I have laid help upon one that is mighty*] I have endowed a man of war with strength. See 1 Sam. xvi. 18.

— *I have exalted one chosen out of the people*] See 2 Sam. vii. 8; Ps lxviii. 71, 72.

21. *With my holy oil*] Refer to

1 Sam. xvi. 13.

22. *Shall hold him fast*] Shall steadfastly uphold him.

23. *To do him violence*] Rather, as in Bible Version, "to exact upon him," to oppress him as a creditor might his debtor.

— *The son of wickedness, &c.*] The reader will remember how frequently David was delivered out of the hand of Saul. See 2 Sam. xxii. 1.

26. *I will set his dominion also in the sea*] A promise of the vast extension of David's kingdom. *The sea*, properly, is the Mediterranean; and *the floods*, the river Euphrates.

27, 28. *He shall call me, &c.*] These verses seem plainly to lead us on to Christ—who continually called God, his 'Father,' and who is

28 'And I will make him my first-born : higher than the kings of the earth.

29 'My mercy will I keep for him for evermore : and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

30 'His seed also will I make to endure for ever : and his throne as the days of heaven.

31 'But if his children forsake my law : and walk not in my judgments ;

32 'If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments : I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges.

33 'Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him : nor suffer my truth to fail.

34 'My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips : I have sworn once by my holiness, that I will not fail David.

35 'His seed shall endure for ever : and his seat is like as the sun before me.

36 'He shall stand fast for evermore as the moon : and as the faithful witness in heaven.'

37 But Thou hast abhorred and forsaken thine Anointed : and art displeased at him.

38 Thou hast broken the covenant of thy servant : and cast his crown to the ground.

39 Thou hast overthrown all his hedges : and broken down his strong holds.

40 All they that go by spoil him : and he is become a reproach to his neighbours.

41 Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies : and made all his adversaries to rejoice.

Himself described as 'the first-born of every creature.' See Ps. ii. 7; Col. i. 15—18; Heb. i. 6.

31—34. *But if his children*] God will visit for the offences of his Church and people, and chastise the guilty; but He will not forget his covenant, nor forsake his chosen.

36. *The faithful witness in*

heaven] The rainbow. See Gen. ix. 13.

37—44. *But Thou, &c.*] These verses seem to have been written in a season when the Church of Israel was passing through great trials, and overrun by victorious enemies.

39. *His hedges*] His walls of defence.

42 Thou hast taken away the edge of his sword : and givest him not victory in the battle.

43 Thou hast put out his glory : and cast his throne down to the ground.

44 The days of his youth hast Thou shortened : and covered him with dishonour.

45 Lord, how long wilt Thou hide thyself, for ever : and shall thy wrath burn like fire ?

46 O remember how short my time is : wherefore hast Thou made all men for nought ?

47 What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death : and shall he deliver his soul from the hand of hell ?

48 Lord, where are thy old loving-kindnesses : which Thou swarest unto David in thy truth ?

49 Remember, Lord, the rebuke that thy servants have : and how I do bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people ;

50 Wherewith thine enemies have blasphemed Thee, and slandered the footsteps of thine Anointed : Praised be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Morning.]

PSALM XC.

Day 18.

GOD'S ETERNITY :—MAN'S SHORT AND FLEETING EXISTENCE.

A Psalm used in the Burial Service.

LORD, Thou hast been our refuge : from one generation to another.

46. *For nought]* Or, in vain ; for a life of vanity and trouble.

47. *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death]* Who shall deliver himself from the power of the grave ?

49. *The rebukes of many people]* The reproaches of many nations.

50. *Slandered the footsteps of thine Anointed]* Have pursued his Anointed One with reproaches and false accusations. Some ancient Commentators understand these words of the taunts to which God's

people (at this time in a very depressed condition) were subjected, in consequence of the delay of their Messiah's advent. Their enemies triumphing over them for a season, mocked at their expectations of a perpetual empire, and of a king who was to reign for ever ; asking insultingly, ' Where is the promise of his coming ? ' See 2 Pet. iii. 4.

— *Praised be the Lord]* This doxology concludes the third Book of the Psalms.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made : Thou art God from everlasting, and world without end.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction : again Thou sayest, 'Come again, ye children of men.'

4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday : seeing that is passed as a watch in the night.

5 As soon as Thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep : and fade away suddenly like the grass.

6 In the morning it is green, and groweth up : but in the evening it is cut down, dried up, and withered.

7 For we consume away in thy displeasure : and are afraid at thy wrathful indignation.

8 Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee : and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

9 For when Thou art angry all our days are gone : we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.

10 The days of our age are threescore years and ten ; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years : yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow ; so soon passeth it away, and we are gone.

Ps. XC.—'A Prayer of Moses, the man of God,' was probably written towards the close of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, when nearly the whole generation of the Israelites of full age who came out of Egypt had passed away, as God had foredoomed. See Numb. xiv. 29.

2. *God from everlasting, &c.*] From a period which had no beginning unto ages which shall have no end ; or, as in the Bible Version, "Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."

3. *Come again, &c.*] Return to the dust whence ye were taken, Gen. iii. 19.

4. *Are but as yesterday, &c.*]

"Are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night." See 2 Pet. iii. 8. The meaning is, that a thousand years in God's eyes are but as yesterday ; or, as a night-watch in ours. The night, beginning at six o'clock in the evening, was divided into four watches of three hours each.

5. *As soon as Thou scatterest them*] "Thou carriest them away as with a flood ; they are as a sleep," are as short-lived and flitting as a dream. Compare Isa. xxix. 7, 8 ; 1 Pet. i. 24.

9. *When Thou art angry, &c.*] We consume away and perish in thy wrath. Allusion may be made to such visitations as those men-

11 But who regardeth the power of thy wrath : for even thereafter as a man feareth, so is thy displeasure.

12 So teach us to number our days : that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13 Turn Thee again, O Lord, at the last : and be gracious unto thy servants.

14 O satisfy us with thy mercy, and that soon : so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

15 Comfort us again now after the time that Thou hast plagued us : and for the years wherein we have suffered adversity.

16 Shew thy servants thy work : and their children thy glory.

17 And the glorious Majesty of the Lord our God be upon us : prosper Thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper Thou our handy-work.

PSALM XCI.

GOD THE PROTECTOR OF HIS SERVANTS IN ALL DANGERS.

WHOSO dwelleth under the defence of the most High : shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

tioned in Numb. xiv. 37; xvi. 32.

11. *But who regardeth, &c.*] Who is there that duly considereth the weight and the consequences of thy anger? For just in proportion as men fear Thee do they take note of thy judgments, and of the effects of thy displeasure. Cf. vv. 7, 9. If we fear God little, and transgress his laws, then is his displeasure great; if we fear Him much, and observe his laws, then is his displeasure turned into mercy and loving-kindness.

12. *To number our days, &c.*] The prayer is not that the exact period of our life may be revealed to us, but that we may have grace to reflect seriously on the shortness

and uncertainty of our time here, and so learn the wisdom of preparing ourselves for the life eternal.

15. *Comfort us again now after the time, &c.*] *After*, in the sense of *according to*. "Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us." Let our future comfort and prosperity bear some proportion to our past troubles and afflictions.

16. *Shew thy servants thy work, &c.*] The prayer of Moses is that the people might be permitted to see the glory of God in the land of promise; a prayer which may well be used by Christians in a spiritual sense.

Ps. XCI. is a most comforting expression of the trust of the pious

2 I will say unto the Lord, 'Thou art my hope, and my strong hold : my God, in Him will I trust.'

3 For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter : and from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers : his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night : nor for the arrow that flieth by day ;

6 For the pestilence that walketh in darkness : nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day.

7 A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand : but it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Yea, with thine eyes shalt thou behold : and see the reward of the ungodly.

9 For Thou, Lord, art my hope : Thou hast set thine house of defence very high.

10 There shall no evil happen unto thee : neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For He shall give his angels charge over thee : to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee in their hands : that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder : the

Israelite in the protecting care of God, whether against natural disease and accident, or against the violence and treachery of men. It may be summed up in the words of St. Paul : 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Rom. viii. 31.

5. *Any terror by night*] Or, the nightly alarm—as surprise, or sudden attack on the part of the enemy. Song of Sol. iii. 8.

8. *The reward of the ungodly*] The retribution or punishment which overtakes sinners.

9. *Thou hast set, &c.*] Thou, the godly person, in taking the Lord for thy hope, hast obtained a secure

refuge and house of defence. The Bib. Ver. is, "Thou hast made the Most High thy habitation."

11, 12. *For he shall give, &c.*] This assurance of care and protection which God has given to his faithful servants is misapplied by Satan, with the purpose of tempting our Lord into the sin of presumption. Matt. iv. 6 ; Luke iv. 10. For the ministry of angels see Gen. xxiv. 7 ; Exod. xxiii. 20 ; xxxiii. 2 ; Heb. i. 14.

13. *Upon the lion and adder*] 'Behold, I give you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions,' &c. Luke x. 19 ; Acts xxviii. 4. The

young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.

14 'Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him : I will set him up, because he hath known my Name.

15 'He shall call upon Me, and I will hear him ; yea, I am with him in trouble ; I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

16 'With long life will I satisfy him : and shew him my salvation.'

PSALM XCII.

PRAISE TO GOD THE ALMIGHTY AND ALL-RIGHTEOUS.

IT is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord : and to sing praises unto thy Name, O most Highest ;

2 To tell of thy loving-kindness early in the morning : and of thy truth in the night-season ;

3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the lute : upon a loud instrument, and upon the harp.

4 For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works : and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of thy hands.

5 O Lord, how glorious are thy works : thy thoughts are very deep.

6 An unwise man doth not well consider this : and a fool doth not understand it.

lion may be taken as the emblem of open violence, the adder of secret malice.

14. *Because he hath set*] In the last three verses Jehovah speaks, and declares what great things He will do for those who put their trust in Him.

Ps. XCII. is entitled in the Bible, "a Psalm or Song for the Sabbath Day," and seems to call upon us to take up God's own words, and pro-

nounce the works of creation 'very good.' The destruction of the ungodly and the exaltation of the righteous are also declared.

2. *Thy truth*] Thy faithfulness to thy covenant and promise.

6. *An unwise man*] They are justly charged with folly who do not see the Almighty Creator in the wonderful works of his hands. Compare Ps. xxviii. 5 ; Isa. v. 12 ; Rom. i. 20.

7 When the ungodly are green as the grass, and when all the workers of wickedness do flourish : then shall they be destroyed for ever ; but Thou, Lord, art the most Highest for evermore.

8 For lo, thine enemies, O Lord, lo, thine enemies shall perish : and all the workers of wickedness shall be destroyed.

9. But mine horn shall be exalted like the horn of an unicorn : for I am anointed with fresh oil.

10 Mine eye also shall see his lust of mine enemies : and mine ear shall hear his desire of the wicked that arise up against me.

11 The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree : and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus.

12 Such as are planted in the house of the Lord : shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God.

13 They also shall bring forth more fruit in their age : and shall be fat and well-liking.

14 That they may shew how true the Lord my strength is : and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

7. *Then shall they be destroyed, &c.*] "It is that they shall be destroyed for ever." Another translation of the verse is as follows.—'Though the wicked shoot up like grass, and all the workers of iniquity flourish; they shall be destroyed for ever. But Thou, O Jehovah, dwellest on high unto eternity.'

9. *Anointed, &c.*] As a favoured guest or successful warrior, who has good reason to rejoice. Ps. xxiii. 5. But more is probably meant; for it will be remembered that the anointing with oil was the form of bestowing kingship, or supreme power. The same figure is employed in the New Testament to mark the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

See 1 John ii. 20, 27; Acts x. 38.

10. *Shall see his lust*] Mine eye sees its desire fulfilled in the downfall of my enemies.

12. *Such as are planted, &c.*] Those who devoutly wait upon the Lord in his sanctuary shall flourish and be blessed, as the palm and the cedar retain their leaves while all around is parched. The wicked, on the other hand, are likened to the grass, which is green in the morning, but withered before night-fall. Compare Ps. lii. 8.

13. *They also shall bring forth, &c.*] "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

— *Shall be fat and well-liking*] Plants full of sap, and flourishing.

Evening.]

PSALM XCIII.

[Day 18.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF JEHOVAH.

THE Lord is King, and hath put on glorious apparel : the Lord hath put on his apparel, and girded Himself with strength.

2 He hath made the round world so sure : that it cannot be moved.

3 Ever since the world began hath thy seat been prepared : Thou art from everlasting.

4 The floods are risen, O Lord, the floods have lift up their voice : the floods lift up their waves.

5 The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly : but yet the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

6 Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very sure : holiness becometh thine house for ever.

PSALM XCIV.

GOD THE ALL-SEEING, ALL-AVENGING JUDGE.

O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth : Thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew Thyself.

Ps. XCIII. asserts, in figurative language, the supreme control of the Most High over the fierce and tumultuous rage of his enemies ; and prophetically, the triumph of the Gospel and the Church over the rage of persecution.

1. *Hath put on glorious apparel*] "Is clothed with majesty."

— *Girded Himself with strength*] So Isa. li. 9, 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord.'

3. *Hath thy seat been prepared*] Hath thy throne been established.

6. *Thy testimonies*] Thy word, and thy promises. Refer for meaning of the word to Ps. xix. 7.

6. *Becometh*] Adorns, is suitable to, befits.

Ps. XCIV. is a testimony to the righteous government of God ; that He will not suffer the wicked to go unpunished, nor forsake those who put their trust in Him.

1. *To whom vengeance belongeth*] 'To Me belongeth vengeance and recompence.' Deut. xxxii. 35 ; a passage referred to by St. Paul, Rom. xii. 19. The Psalmist, in the name of God's people, appeals to Him to avenge them of their adversaries. Vengeance in the sense it is used, is nothing else than Divine

2 Arise, Thou Judge of the world : and reward the proud after their deserving.

3 Lord, how long shall the ungodly : how long shall the ungodly triumph ?

4 How long shall all wicked doers speak so disdainfully : and make such proud boasting ?

5 They smite down thy people, O Lord : and trouble thine heritage.

6 They murder the widow, and the stranger : and put the fatherless to death.

7 And yet they say, 'Tush, the Lord shall not see : neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.'

8 Take heed, ye unwise among the people : O ye fools, when will ye understand ?

9 He that planted the ear, shall He not hear : or He that made the eye, shall He not see ?

10 Or He that nutureth the heathen : it is He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He punish ?

11 The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man : that they are but vain.

12 Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord : and teachest him in thy law ;

13 That Thou mayest give him patience in time of adversity : until the pit be digged up for the ungodly.

14 For the Lord will not fail his people : neither will He forsake his inheritance ;

15 Until righteousness turn again unto judgment : all such as are true in heart shall follow it.

justice ; which defends the oppressed, and punishes the wrongdoer.

10. *He that nutureth, &c.*] The rendering of the Bible seems to be more precise. "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct?"

12. *Whom Thou chastenest, &c.*] How exactly does this reflection correspond with the spirit of the passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, xii. 5—11 ; especially with v. 6 :—'Whom the Lord loveth He

chasteneth.'

13. *Patience in time of adversity, &c.*] Rest and safety in the time of trouble and danger, until death or destruction overtake the wicked.

15. *Until righteousness, &c.*] For justice shall yet return unto right. Justice may seem to have forsaken the seat of law, but this was only for a season of trial ; she will return to her place, and then all true and righteous men will follow in her train.

16 Who will rise up with me against the wicked : or who will take my part against the evil-doers ?

17 If the Lord had not helped me : it had not failed, but my soul had been put to silence.

18 But when I said, 'My foot hath slipt' : thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.

19 In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart : thy comforts have refreshed my soul.

20 Wilt Thou have any thing to do with the stool of wickedness : which imagineth mischief as a law ?

21 They gather them together against the soul of the righteous : and condemn the innocent blood.

22 But the Lord is my refuge : and my God is the strength of my confidence.

23 He shall recompense them their wickedness, and destroy them in their own malice : yea, the Lord our God shall destroy them.

Morning.]

PSALM XCV.

[Day 19.]

INVITATION TO THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH.

O COME, let us sing unto the Lord : let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

17. *If the Lord, &c.]* The meaning is,—If the Lord had not taken my part, I must soon have been laid in the silent grave. Ps. xxxi. 19.

18. *But when I said, My foot hath slipt, &c.]* While I thought I was falling, thy mercy held me up.

20. *The stool of wickedness]* The tribunal of wicked and corrupt judges. The Bible Version is,—“Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, which frameth mischief by a law ?” One of the comforts which refresh the soul (v. 19) of the righteous under persecution, is the thought, that God cannot ‘have any thing to do’ with injustice and oppression.

23. *He shall recompense them,*

&c.] “He shall bring upon them their own iniquity,” and destroy them in their own malice, that is, by means of the crafty plots which they have laid against others.

Ps. XCV., called the ‘Venite,’ from the first word in the Latin Version, has been used by the Church from the earliest times as a suitable introduction to the worship and praise of Almighty God. For this reason it is sometimes termed ‘the Invitatory Psalm,’ and has consequently been placed by our own Church before the Psalms at Morning Service.

1. *Let us heartily rejoice, &c.]* Or, ‘Let us raise a joyful shout unto the Rock of our Salvation.’

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving : and shew ourselves glad in Him with psalms.

3 For the Lord is a great God : and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are all the corners of the earth : and the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and He made it : and his hands prepared the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and fall down : and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

7 For He is the Lord our God : and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

8 To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts : as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness,

9 When your fathers tempted Me : proved Me, and saw my works.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said : It is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known my ways ;

11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath : that they should not enter into my rest.

4. *The corners of the earth*] "The deep places of the earth."

— *The strength of the hills* should be rather, the heights of the mountains. The meaning is, that the loftiest mountains, and the lowest depths of the earth, are alike his and in his power.

7. *The sheep of his hand*] It is Jesus Christ, and no other, who declared of Himself, 'I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.' John x. 14. See also Ps. xxiii. 1.

8. *As in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation*] Rather, as at Meribah—as in the day of Massah. 'He called the name of the

place Massah and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?' Exod. xvii. 7; Heb. iii. 7—11. Compare also Ps. lxxviii. 18. 'Yet for all this they sinned more against Him : and provoked the Most Highest in the wilderness.'

9. *And saw my works*] Notwithstanding the miracles and wondrous works which they had seen. Exod. xvii. 7.

11. *My rest*] The promised rest of Canaan, and also that rest of which Canaan was a type. See Heb. iv. 9.

PSALM XCVI.

JEHOVAH THE SOLE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

O SING unto the Lord a new song : sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth.

2 Sing unto the Lord, and praise his Name : be telling of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his honour unto the heathen : and his wonders unto all people.

4 For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised : He is more to be feared than all gods.

5 As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but idols : but it is the Lord that made the heavens.

6 Glory and worship are before Him : power and honour are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people : ascribe unto the Lord worship and power.

8 Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name : bring presents, and come into his courts.

9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness : let the whole earth stand in awe of Him.

10 Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King : and that it is He who hath made the round

Ps. XCVI. forms part of David's Song of Thanksgiving on bringing up the Ark of God to Mount Zion. See 1 Chron. xvi. 23—33. The Psalmist calls upon all nations, and all nature, to join in one universal song of praise and thanksgiving to God the Lord of all; whose coming to judgment he announces.

1. *A new song*] A song of thanksgiving for new mercies. Ps. xxxiii. 3; xcvi. 1; Isa. xlii. 10; Rev. v. 9, 10.

7. *O ye kindreds of the people*] Ye families of the nations; ye nations of different race.

8. *Presents*] It was the custom in the East to offer gifts to a conqueror or king, in token of submission or allegiance. 2 Sam viii. 2. Here it signifies offerings, incense, &c. See Mal. i. 11.

9. *In the beauty of holiness*] With reference outwardly to the beauty of the holy sanctuary and the vestments of the priests; inwardly, to the ornament of a pure and undefiled spirit. Refer to Matt. xxii. 11; Rev. xix. 8.

10. *That the Lord is King, &c.*] Compare Ps. xciii. 1. Revelation teaches us that the Almighty made

world so fast that it cannot be moved ; and how that He shall judge the people righteously.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad : let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it : then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.

13 For He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth : and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth.

PSALM XCVII.

JEHOVAH THE GOD AND KING OF ALL THE EARTH.

THE Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof : yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.

2 Clouds and darkness are round about Him : righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his seat.

3 There shall go a fire before Him : and burn up his enemies on every side.

4 His lightnings gave shine unto the world : the earth saw it, and was afraid.

5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord : at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

the worlds by his Son, Jesus Christ, whom He hath also appointed *Judge* of all men.

11. *Let the sea make a noise, &c.* "Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof."

13. *For He cometh, &c.* In the bold language of poetry the heavens and the earth are called upon to rejoice in the promised coming of the Lord to judge the world in equity, and to set up his righteous kingdom.

Ps. XCVII., like the preceding one, treats of the power and ma-

jesty of God, and looks forward to the triumph of the Messiah.

1. *The multitude of the isles*] The word *isle*, or *island*, is constantly used in Scripture to signify any country beyond the sea. Compare Isa. xlii. 10, 12.

2—5. *Clouds and darkness, &c.*] Similar imagery is employed in Ps. xviii. 7—15 ; 1. 3. It may be compared to the description of the terrors of Mount Sinai.

2. *The habitation of his seat*] Rather, the basis of his throne, as at Ps. lxxxix. 15.

6 The heavens have declared his righteousness : and all the people have seen his glory.

7 Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in vain gods : worship Him, all ye gods.

8 Sion heard of it, and rejoiced : and the daughters of Judah were glad, because of thy judgments, O Lord.

9 For Thou, Lord, art higher than all that are in the earth : Thou art exalted far above all gods.

10 O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil : the Lord preserveth the souls of his saints ; He shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.

11 There is sprung up a light for the righteous : and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted.

12 Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous : and give thanks for a remembrance of his holiness.

Evening.]

PSALM XCVIII.

[Day 19.

SONG OF VICTORY.—CHRIST'S COMING TO JUDGMENT.

O SING unto the Lord a new song : for He hath done marvellous things.

2 With his own right hand, and with his holy arm : hath He gotten Himself the victory.

7. *Vain gods*] Rather, Idols, vanities, nothings.

— *Worship Him, all ye gods*] ‘When He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.’ Heb. i. 6.

8. *Sion heard of it*] Of the overthrow and confusion of idolaters, and of God’s sovereign judgments. Compare Ps. xlviii. 10.

11. *There is sprung up a light, &c.*] “Light is sown for the righteous.” The light of peace and joy which God has promised to his suf-

fering people may be hidden for a time, but will sooner or later break out and shine upon them (Luke i. 78, 79), as seed, which for a while lies buried in the ground, ‘springs up and bears fruit in due season.’ Heb. xii. 11 ; Gal. iv. 9.

Ps. XCVIII.—This animated ode of triumph and praise, which belongs probably to the period of David’s reign, is adopted in our Prayer-Book as one of the Canticles after the First Lesson at Evening Service.

3 The Lord declared his salvation : his righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

4 He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel : and all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.

5 Shew yourselves joyful unto the Lord, all ye lands : sing, rejoice, and give thanks.

6 Praise the Lord upon the harp : sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.

7 With trumpets also, and shawms : O shew yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.

8 Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is : the round world, and they that dwell therein.

9 Let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord : for He is come to judge the earth.

10 With righteousness shall He judge the world : and the people with equity.

PSALM XCIX.

THE MAJESTY, JUSTICE, AND MERCY OF JEHOVAH.

THE Lord is King, be the people never so impatient : He sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.

3. *Declared his salvation*] Hath made known or manifested his power to save.

4. *All the ends of the world, &c.*] Compare Isa. lii. 10, where the same words are used—words which, in their fullest meaning, must point to the preaching of the Gospel among all nations.

7. *Shawms*] Translated in the Bible “cornet,” another kind of wind instrument.

8. *Let the sea, &c.*] The last three verses of this Psalm bear a close resemblance to the last three of Ps. xcvi. In both passages the assurance of God’s righteous

judgment is made the ground of universal praise and thanksgiving.

9. *Clap their hands, &c.*] ‘The deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.’ Hab. iii. 10.

Ps. XCIX. differs from Psalms xcv.—xcviii. in its greater nationality of tone. They celebrate the praises of Jehovah as God and Saviour of mankind : this Psalm regards Him as the peculiar God of Israel, and dwells upon the especial privileges of the Jewish people. Compare Rom. ix. 4, 5.

1. *The Lord is King, &c.*] “The Lord reigneth, let the people

2 The Lord is great in Sion : and high above all people.

3 They shall give thanks unto thy Name : which is great, wonderful, and holy.

4 The King's power loveth judgment ; Thou hast prepared equity : Thou hast executed judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

5 O magnify the Lord our God : and fall down before his footstool, for He is holy.

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among such as call upon his Name : these called upon the Lord, and He heard them.

7 He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar : for they kept his testimonies, and the law that He gave them.

8 Thou heardest them, O Lord our God : Thou forgavest them, O God, and punishedst their own inventions.

9 O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon his holy hill : for the Lord our God is holy.

PSALM C.

A CALL UPON ALL NATIONS TO PRAISE THE GOD OF ALL.

O BE joyful in the Lord, all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

tremble ; He sitteth between the cherubims, let the earth be moved."

4. *The King's power loveth judgment*] Another reason for giving thanks to Jehovah is, that He is All-merciful as well as All-mighty ; ruling his enemies indeed with 'a rod of iron,' but showing loving-kindness to his own people.

6. *Samuel among such, &c.*] For an instance of Samuel's intercessory prayer, see 1 Sam. vii. 9.

7. *He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar*] Jehovah went before the camp of the Israelites in a

'pillar of a cloud,' from out of which he issued his commands by the mouth of his servant Moses. See Exod. xix. 9.

8. *Thou forgavest them, &c.*] Rather, "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though Thou tookest vengeance of their inventions:" that is, on account of the new and sinful ways which they found out for themselves in defiance of thy law. See Eccl. vii. 29.

Ps. C., as applicable to Christian as to Jewish worship, is used daily

2 Be ye sure that the Lord He is God : it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves ; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

3 O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise : be thankful unto Him, and speak good of his Name.

4 For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting : and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

PSALM CI.

DAVID'S MAXIMS OF CONDUCT AS KING.

MY song shall be of mercy and judgment : unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing.

2 O let me have understanding : in the way of godliness.

3 When wilt Thou come unto me : I will walk in my house with a perfect heart.

4 I will take no wicked thing in hand ; I hate the sins of unfaithfulness : there shall no such cleave unto me.

by the Church after the Second Lesson at Morning Service. This Psalm concludes a connected series of ten (xc. — c.), all of which appear to belong to the same time and to the same writer. They concur in exhibiting the relation in which Israel stood to the rest of the world, the temporal and spiritual deliverance of God's people, and the overthrow of his enemies, who had too long oppressed them. The tone of this portion of the Psalms resembles that of the latter chapters of Isaiah.

Ps. CI. is commonly supposed to have been written about the time that David, having subdued the neighbouring tribes, had obtained undisputed possession of the king-

dom. It is one of the Psalms appointed to be used at the consecration of our sovereigns. This Psalm seems to bear a peculiarly domestic character, and contains invaluable lessons for the guidance of a household.

1. *Judgment*] Justice and righteousness.

2. *O let me have understanding*] "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way."

3. *Come unto me*] That is, to my succour and support. When wilt Thou lift up the light of thy countenance upon me?

— *Will walk in my house, &c.*] Will conduct myself blameless towards my household and among my people. 1 Sam. xviii. 14, 15.

5 A froward heart shall depart from me : I will not know a wicked person.

6 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour : him will I destroy.

7 Whoso hath also a proud look and high stomach : I will not-suffer him.

8 Mine eyes look upon such as are faithful in the land : that they may dwell with me.

9 Whoso leadeth a godly life : he shall be my servant.

10 There shall no deceitful person dwell in my house : he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

11 I shall soon destroy all the ungodly that are in the land : that I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.

Morning.]

PSALM CII.

[Day 20.]

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SORROW.

HEAR my prayer, O Lord : and let my crying come unto Thee.

2 Hide not thy face from me in the time of my trouble : incline thine ear unto me when I call ; O hear me, and that right soon.

6. *Him will I destroy*] I will cut him off from my presence and favour.

7. *A high stomach*] A proud, self-trusting, wilful spirit. See Prov. xxi. 4.

9. *My servant*] That is, a minister and counsellor of my kingdom.

10. *No deceitful person, &c.*] Nothing is more worthy of remark than the uniform condemnation in the Psalms and in the Holy Scriptures generally, of every form of falsehood and deceit, and of every one 'that loveth and maketh a lie.' Rev. xxii. 15.

11. *I shall soon destroy, &c.*]

"I will early destroy," or, more literally, every morning will I destroy. The words express the zeal of David against his own and God's enemies. See Jer. xxi. 12.

Ps. CII. is the fifth of the Penitential Psalms. It is entitled in the Bible, 'A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.' The Psalmist laments his own and his country's troubles, but expresses a full confidence that God will in time remember his covenant of mercy, and grant deliverance.

3 For my days are consumed away like smoke : and my bones are burnt up as it were a fire-brand.

4 My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass : so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 For the voice of my groaning : my bones will scarce cleave to my flesh.

6 I am become like a pelican in the wilderness : and like an owl that is in the desert.

7 I have watched, and am even as it were a sparrow : that sitteth alone upon the house-top.

8 Mine enemies revile me all the day long : and they that are mad upon me are sworn together against me.

9 For I have eaten ashes as it were bread : and mingled my drink with weeping ;

10 And that because of thine indignation and wrath : for Thou hast taken me up, and cast me down.

11 My days are gone like a shadow : and I am withered like grass.

12 But Thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever : and thy remembrance throughout all generations.

13 Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion : for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her ; yea, the time is come.

14 And why ? thy servants think upon her stones : and it pitieth them to see her in the dust.

5. *My bones will scarce cleave to my flesh*] The Bible Version, "My bones cleave to my skin," is more exact. See Job xix. 20.

6, 7. *I am become, &c.*] The mourner compares himself to a bird which loves the solitude, and remains apart from his fellows. This description, however, does not suit the *sparrow* (ver. 7), whose habits are not solitary but gregarious. It has been suggested that the bird referred to may be the solitary thrush, a species common in more southern climes.

8. *Are sworn together against me*] Rather, perhaps, Swear by me,

—make my name a mode of cursing others, saying, for instance, May he become like David. See Isa. lrv. 15 ; Jer. xxix. 22.

9. *Have eaten ashes, &c.*] Have fed upon trouble and sorrow. See Isa. xxx. 20.

10. *For Thou hast taken me up, &c.*] Thou hast lifted me up, and hurled me to the ground.

11. *Are gone like a shadow*] "My days are like a shadow that declineth," that is, at the approach of sunset.

14. *And it pitieth them, &c.*] "And favour the dust thereof."

15 The heathen shall fear thy Name, O Lord : and all the kings of the earth thy Majesty ;

16 When the Lord shall build up Sion : and when his glory shall appear ;

17 When He turneth Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute : and despiseth not their desire.

18 This shall be written for those that come after : and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord.

19 For He hath looked down from his sanctuary : out of the heaven did the Lord behold the earth ;

20 That He might hear the mournings of such as are in captivity : and deliver the children appointed unto death.

21 That they may declare the Name of the Lord in Sion : and his worship at Jerusalem ;

22 When the people are gathered together : and the kingdoms also, to serve the Lord.

23 He brought down my strength in my journey : and shortened my days.

24 But I said, 'O my God, take me not away in the midst of mine age : as for thy years, they endure throughout all generations.'

25 'Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth : and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

15. *The heathen shall fear, &c.*] So shall the Gentiles reverence the Name of Jehovah.

18. *For those that come after*] These instances of God's mercy and faithfulness shall be recorded for future generations.

19. *From his sanctuary*] More correctly, from the height of his holiness.

20. *In captivity, &c.*] Or more simply, as in Bib. Ver. "To hear the groaning of the prisoner ; to loose those that are appointed to

death."

23. *In my journey*] My journey of life.

24. *As for thy years, &c.*] The argument is this:—I am subject to death at any moment, but Thou remainest unchangeably the same for evermore.

25—28.] These verses are quoted, Heb. i. 10—12, with special application to our Lord Jesus Christ, as showing his eternal, unchangeable nature.

26 'They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure : they all shall wax old as doth a garment ;

27 'And as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed : but Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

28 'The children of thy servants shall continue : and their seed shall stand fast in thy sight.'

PSALM CIII.

GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF GOD'S MERCIES.

PRAISE the Lord, O my soul : and all that is within me praise his holy Name.

2 Praise the Lord, O my soul : and forget not all his benefits ;

3 Who forgiveth all thy sin : and healeth all thine infirmities.

4 Who saveth thy life from destruction : and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things : making thee young and lusty as an eagle.

6 The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment : for all them that are oppressed with wrong.

7 He shewed his ways unto Moses : his works unto the children of Israel.

8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy : long-suffering, and of great goodness.

28. *The children of Thy servants, &c.*] The descendants of Thy true and faithful worshippers shall stand before Thee from generation to generation.

Ps. CIII., ascribed to David, is couched in language which must come home to the hearts of all who have ever truly felt God's long-suffering goodness, and is, therefore, admirably adapted to the purpose of praise and thanksgiving by Christians of all times.

3. *Forgiveth all thy sin, &c.*] It

is much to be observed throughout Scripture how often bodily disease is mentioned in close connexion with sin ; and as, in point of fact, springing out of it. Thus, in healing the sick of the palsy, our Saviour says, 'Thy *sins* be forgiven thee.' Matt. ix. 2 ; Mark ii. 5.

5. *Lusty*] Strong, vigorous, full of life.

— *As an eagle*] 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles.' Isa. xl. 31.

9 He will not always be chiding : neither keepeth He his anger for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins : nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses.

11 For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth : so great is his mercy also toward them that fear Him.

12 Look how wide also the east is from the west : so far hath He set our sins from us.

13 Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children : even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him.

14 For He knoweth whereof we are made : He remembereth that we are but dust.

15 The days of man are but as grass : for he flourisheth as a flower of the field.

16 For as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone : and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the merciful goodness of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear Him : and his righteousness upon children's children ;

18 Even upon such as keep his covenant : and think upon his commandments to do them.

19 The Lord hath prepared his seat in heaven : and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 O praise the Lord, ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength : ye that fulfil his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his words.

21 O praise the Lord, all ye his hosts : ye servants of his that do his pleasure.

9. *Will not always be chiding*] Notwithstanding the sins and offences by which we are perpetually provoking God's wrath, He is too merciful to be for ever punishing, and is ready to cease from anger on the first sign of true repentance.

10. *He hath not dealt with us after our sins*] He hath not punished us as we, for our sins, de-

served. Thus, in the Litany, we pray, 'O Lord, deal not with us *after* (according to) our sins; neither reward us *after* our iniquities.'

12. *So far hath He set our sins from us*] So large and complete is his forgiveness to the penitent.

20. *Fulfil his commandment*] That is, serve as ministers to execute the orders of the Most High.

22 O speak good of the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion : praise thou the Lord, O my soul.

Evening.]

PSALM CIV.

[*Day 20.*]

HYMN OF PRAISE TO THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS.

Proper Psalm for Whit-Sunday.

PRAISE the Lord, O my soul : O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious ; Thou art clothed with majesty and honour.

2 Thou deckest Thyself with light as it were with a garment : and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.

3. Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters : and maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.

4 He maketh his angels spirits : and his ministers a flaming fire.

5. He laid the foundations of the earth : that it never should move at any time.

6. Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment : the waters stand in the hills.

7 At thy rebuke they flee : at the voice of thy thunder they are afraid.

8 They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath : even unto the place which Thou hast appointed for them.

Ps. CIV. is a truly sublime poem, setting forth, in the richest language, the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as Maker of the world and all that therein is.

3. *The beams of his chambers, &c.*] That is, Maketh his dwelling-place on the waters.

4. *He maketh his angels spirits*] More clearly, He maketh the winds his messengers, and flaming fire his ministers. This verse is quoted by St. Paul, Heb. i. 7. See Job xxxviii. 35.

5. *Never should move at any time*] Or, "should not be removed for ever."

6. *Thou coveredst it with the deep*] With the deep waters. See Gen. i. 2.

— *The waters stand in the hills*] "The waters stood above the mountains."

7. *At thy rebuke they flee*] "At thy rebuke they fled ; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away." See Gen. i. 7.

9 Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass : neither turn again to cover the earth.

10 He sendeth the springs into the rivers : which run among the hills.

11 All beasts of the field drink thereof : and the wild asses quench their thirst.

12 Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation : and sing among the branches.

13 He watereth the hills from above : the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.

14 He bringeth forth grass for the cattle : and green herb for the service of men ;

15 That he may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man : and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart.

16 The trees of the Lord also are full of sap : even the cedars of Libanus which he hath planted ;

17 Wherein the birds make their nests : and the fir-trees are a dwelling for the stork.

18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats : and so are the stony rocks for the conies.

19 He appointed the moon for certain seasons : and the sun knoweth his going down.

10. *Into the rivers*] Rather, as in the Bib. Ver. "into the valleys."

12. *Sing among the branches*] In the east, trees grow chiefly on the margin of rivers, and near fountains of water.

13. *From above*] From his chambers on high,—from the clouds. See verse 3.

15. *And oil, &c.*] Some understand the words to mean, making his face to shine as with oil.

16. *The trees of the Lord*] The majestic trees which had sprung up without human care or cultivation. Compare Ps. lxxx. 10, where, in the Bible Version, the goodly cedars

are in the margin called (according to the Hebrew form of superlative) the "cedars of God."

18. *The wild goats*] Or rather, perhaps, the chamois.

— *The cony*] is supposed to be the Syrian hyrax, a creature somewhat resembling the English rabbit. See Prov. xxx. 26.

19. *For certain seasons*] To mark the distinction of time, and 'to divide the day from the night.' Gen. i. 14.

— *The sun knoweth his going down*] That is, obeys the laws of its Creator, for the benefit of his creatures.

20 Thou makest darkness that it may be night : wherein all the beasts of the forest do move.

21 The lions roaring after their prey : do seek their meat from God.

22 The sun ariseth, and they get them away together : and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour : until the evening.

24 O Lord, how manifold are thy works : in wisdom hast Thou made them all ; the earth is full of thy riches.

25 So is the great and wide sea also : wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships, and there is that leviathan : whom Thou hast made to take his pastime therein.

27 These wait all upon Thee : that Thou mayest give them meat in due season.

28 When Thou givest it them they gather it : and when Thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good.

29 When Thou hidest thy face they are troubled : when Thou takest away their breath they die, and are turned again to their dust.

30 When Thou lettest thy breath go forth they shall be made : and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

20. *Thou makest darkness that it may be night*] "Thou makest darkness and it is night."

— *Wherein all the beasts of the forest do move*] Then do all the wild beasts of the forest prowl.

25. *Small and great beasts*] The word *beast* is used in our version of the Bible for any living creature except man. In this place it denotes fishes. In Gen. iii. 1 it is applied to the serpent; and in Rev. iv. 7, to birds,—'an eagle.'

26. *Leviathan*] The whale may probably be meant. See Job xli. 1.

29. *Hidest thy face*] When Thou withdrawest thy favour and protection; as in times of famine, storm, or frost.

30. *When Thou lettest thy breath go forth, &c.*] "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created." See Gen. i. 2; Job xxxiii. 4.

— *Shalt renew the face of the earth*] Shalt call into life other creatures to occupy the place of those which have been removed by death. A new creation succeeds to that which has passed away.

31 The glorious Majesty of the Lord shall endure for ever : the Lord shall rejoice in his works.

32 The earth shall tremble at the look of Him : if He do but touch the hills, they shall smoke.

33 I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live : I will praise my God while I have my being.

34 And so shall my words please Him : my joy shall be in the Lord.

35 As for sinners, they shall be consumed out of the earth, and the ungodly shall come to an end : praise thou the Lord, O my soul, praise the Lord.

Morning.]

PSALM CV.

[*Day 21.*

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL OF OLD.

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his Name : tell the people what things He hath done.

2 O let your songs be of Him, and praise Him : and let your talking be of all his wondrous works.

3 Rejoice in his holy Name : let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

4 Seek the Lord and his strength : seek his face evermore.

5 Remember the marvellous works that He hath done : his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth,

6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant : ye children of Jacob his chosen.

7 He is the Lord our God : his judgments are in all the world.

32. *The earth shall tremble, &c.*]
"He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth: He toucheth the hills, and they smoke."

Ps. CV.—The Psalmist calls upon his countrymen to praise Jehovah, who, ever mindful of his covenant with their father Abraham, had delivered them from their long captivity in Egypt, and brought them, *by signs and wonders* which He did, *into the possession of the promised*

land of Canaan. See Gen. xii. 2 ; xv. 5 ; xvii. 2 ; xxii. 17 ; xxvi. 3. The first fifteen verses are found in 1 Chron. xvi. 8—22.

5. *Judgments of his mouth*] Sentences of judgment pronounced and executed against his enemies.

7. *His judgments are in all the world*] He hath manifested his power and providence to all nations by the mighty things which He hath wrought for his people Israel.

8 He hath been alway mindful of his covenant and promise : that He made to a thousand generations ;

9 Even the covenant that He made with Abraham : and the oath that He sware unto Isaac ;

10 And appointed the same unto Jacob for a law : and to Israel for an everlasting testament ;

11 Saying, 'Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan : the lot of your inheritance ;'

12 When there were yet but a few of them : and they strangers in the land ;

13 What time as they went from one nation to another : from one kingdom to another people ;

14 He suffered no man to do them wrong : but re-proved even kings for their sakes ;

15 'Touch not mine anointed : and do my prophets no harm.'

16 Moreover, He called for a dearth upon the land : and destroyed all the provision of bread.

17 But He had sent a man before them : even Joseph, who was sold to be a bondservant ;

10. *An everlasting testament*] A promise or decree which should never be broken.

11. *Unto thee will I give, &c.*] 'The land whereon thou (Jacob) liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.' Gen. xxviii. 13.

12. *But a few of them*] 'And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites ; and I, being few in number, they shall gather themselves against me, and slay me.' Gen. xxxiv. 30.

— *Strangers in the land*] 'I will give to thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting covenant ; and I will be their God.' Gen. xvii. 8. See also Gen. xxiii. 4,

and Acts vii. 5.

14. *Reproved even kings, &c.*] Rebuked by chastisements, or by warnings of the consequences that would follow, as at Gen. xii. 17 ; xx. 7 ; xxxi. 24.

15. *Mine anointed*] My chosen instruments : those whom, like the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, God had set apart and consecrated to his service, and for the execution of his providential designs.

— *Prophets*] This term is applied, not to those only who foretold future events, but to holy men commissioned by God to speak in his name.

16. *A dearth upon the land, &c.*] That is, upon the land of Canaan. Gen. xli. 54. Compare Isa. iii. 1.

17. *Even Joseph*] For the his-

18 Whose feet they hurt in the stocks : the iron entered into his soul ;

19 Until the time came that his cause was known : the word of the Lord tried him.

20 The king sent, and delivered him : the prince of the people let him go free.

21 He made him lord also of his house : and ruler of all his substance ;

22 That he might inform his princes after his will : and teach his senators wisdom.

23 Israel also came into Egypt : and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham.

24 And He increased his people exceedingly : and made them stronger than their enemies ;

25 Whose heart turned so, that they hated his people : and dealt untruly with his servants.

26 Then sent He Moses his servant : and Aaron whom he had chosen.

27 And these shewed his tokens among them : and wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He sent darkness, and it was dark : and they were not obedient unto his word.

29 He turned their waters into blood : and slew their fish.

tory of Joseph, see Genesis, especially xxxix. 1, and xlv. 7, 8.

18. *The iron entered into his soul*] As the iron fetters galled his limbs, so the cruel and shameful treatment of a prison pierced and wounded his spirit. See Gen. xxxix. 20.

19. *That his cause was known*] Or, Until his words, that is, his prophecy to his fellow-servants, came to pass.

— *The word of the Lord tried him*] The interpretation of the dreams which he was enabled by the vision to make, cleared and justified him.

22. *Inform his princes*] Direct

and control, according to his pleasure, the great men and rulers of Pharaoh's court, and give wise instruction to the *senators*, or elders and councillors of the kingdom.

23. *The land of Ham*] Egypt. Refer to Ps. lxxviii. 52.

28. *He sent darkness*] For the account of the plagues of Egypt, see Exod. viii.—xii.

— *They were not obedient, &c.*] The Bib. Ver. gives the contrary, and probably correct meaning:—"They rebelled not against his word." That is, subdued by God's repeated judgments, they no longer resisted his will.

30 Their land brought forth frogs : yea, even in their kings' chambers.

31 He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies : and lice in all their quarters.

32 He gave them hailstones for rain : and flames of fire in their land.

33 He smote their vines also, and fig-trees : and destroyed the trees that were in their coasts.

34 He spake the word, and the grasshoppers came, and caterpillars innumerable : and did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

35 He smote all the first-born in their land : even the chief of all their strength.

36 He brought them forth also with silver and gold : there was not one feeble person among their tribes.

37 Egypt was glad at their departing : for they were afraid of them.

38 He spread out a cloud to be a covering : and fire to give light in the night-season.

39 At their desire He brought quails : and He filled them with the bread of heaven.

40 He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out : so that rivers ran in the dry places.

41 For why? He remembered his holy promise : and Abraham his servant.

42 And He brought forth his people with joy : and his chosen with gladness ;

36. *With silver and gold*] The children of Israel, on their departure, asked and received from the Egyptians 'jewels of silver and jewels of gold.' Exod. xii. 35.

— *Not one feeble person, &c.*] Of all the thousands of Israel, not one was left behind through lameness or infirmity,—not one but was able to march out with his ransomed

countrymen.

38. *A cloud... and fire*] In allusion to the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, which went before their armies. Numb. ix. 16.

39. *The bread of Heaven*] The manna which was sent from Heaven to feed them in the wilderness. Ps. lxxviii. 25. Compare also St. John vi. 31—35; 49—51.

43 And gave them the lands of the heathen : and they took the labours of the people in possession ;

44 That they might keep his statutes : and observe his laws.

Evening.]

PSALM CVI.

[Day 21.]

THE TRIALS OF THE WILDERNESS.

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious : and his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Who can express the noble acts of the Lord : or shew forth all his praise ?

3 Blessed are they that alway keep judgment : and do righteousness.

4 Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto thy people : O visit me with thy salvation ;

5 That I may see the felicity of thy chosen : and rejoice in the gladness of thy people, and give thanks with thine inheritance.

6 We have sinned with our fathers : we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly.

7 Our fathers regarded not thy wonders in Egypt, neither kept they thy great goodness in remembrance : but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless, He helped them for his Name's sake : that He might make his power to be known.

9 He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried

43. *The labours of the people]*
The fruits of their labour; their corn, and wine, and oil.

Ps. CVI. was probably written about the end of the Babylonian captivity. It forms a natural supplement to Ps. cv., for whereas that celebrates Jehovah's covenant with Abraham, his protection of the Israelites in Egypt, their deliverance, and final settlement in Canaan,

Ps. CVI. acknowledges the ungrateful return which the people had made for all these mercies, and admits the justice of the Divine judgments on their disobedience and rebellion.

3. *Keep judgment]* Follow the ways of justice, and keep God's commandments.

5. *The felicity, &c.]* The happiness and prosperity of thy chosen ones.

up : so He led them through the deep, as through a wilderness.

10 And He saved them from the adversary's hand : and delivered them from the hand of the enemy.

11 As for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them : there was not one of them left.

12 Then believed they his words : and sang praise unto Him.

13 But within a while they forgot his works : and would not abide his counsel.

14 But lust came upon them in the wilderness : and they tempted God in the desert.

15 And He gave them their desire : and sent leanness withal into their soul.

16 They angered Moses also in the tents : and Aaron the saint of the Lord.

17 So the earth opened, and swallowed up Dathan : and covered the congregation of Abiram.

18 And the fire was kindled in their company : the flame burnt up the ungodly.

19 They made a calf in Horeb : and worshipped the molten image.

20 Thus they turned their glory : into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay.

9. *As through a wilderness*] As over dry land.

11. *Those that troubled them, &c.*] "The waters covered their enemies." See Exod. xv. 5.

13. *Would not abide his counsel*] Would not trust his promise, and wait in patience for its fulfilment.

14. *Lust*] The cravings of appetite. Numb. xi. 4.

15. *And sent leanness*] But, while showering down flesh in abundance for them to eat, He sent a plague and wasting sickness upon them. See Numb. xi. 33, 34.

16. *Angered*] "Envied Moses."

17. *The earth opened*] For the

history of the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram, see Numb. xvi.

19. *They made a calf*] The people, impatient at the long absence of Moses in the Mount, required Aaron to make them 'gods;' and he sinfully complied with their request, and made for them a *molten image*, such, probably, as they had seen in Egypt; that is, the image of a calf, made of gold melted in the fire and shaped by the mould into which it was cast. Refer to Exod. xxxii. 4.

20. *They turned their glory, &c.*] They dishonoured the living God whom it was their privilege to worship, by representing Him under

21 And they forgot God their Saviour : who had done so great things in Egypt ;

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham : and fearful things by the Red Sea.

23 So He said, He would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before Him in the gap : to turn away his wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them.

24 Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land : and gave no credence unto his word ;

25 But murmured in their tents : and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.

26 Then lift He up his hand against them : to overthrow them in the wilderness ;

27 To cast out their seed among the nations : and to scatter them in the lands.

28 They joined themselves unto Baal-Peor : and ate the offerings of the dead.

29 Thus they provoked Him to anger with their own inventions : and the plague was great among them.

30 Then stood up Phinees and prayed : and so the plague ceased.

the *similitude* or likeness of a calf that eateth hay, or, as it is translated in the Bible, "an ox that eateth graas."

22. *The land of Ham*] Egypt, a country peopled by the descendants of Ham. Ps. lxxviii. 52.

23. *In the gap*] "In the breach," to resist, as it were, the further inroads of God's avenging angel. The weapons which Moses used successfully were intercession and prayer. Read Exod. xxxii. 10—14.

24. *Thought scorn*] Contemned and made light of the land of promise to which Jehovah, by his servant Moses, was conducting them. See Numb. xiii. xiv.

— *Gave no credence, &c.*] Did not believe his word.

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26. *Then lift He up his hand*] The gesture of one taking an oath. God swore that He would let them perish in the wilderness. Numb. xiv. 30, margin ; Deut. xxxii. 40 ; See also Psalm xcv. 11.

28. *Baal-Peor*] Literally, the Lord of Peor, which was a mountain in Moab ; and so we may understand Baal to mean the false god, or idol, of the Moabites. See Numb. xxv. 3.

— *Offerings of the dead*] The sacrifices offered to lifeless idols. Compare 1 Cor. viii. 4.

29. *Their own inventions*] The false worship and sinful practices which they had devised.

30. *And prayed*] "Executed judgment." Phinehas acted as a

31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness : among all posterities for evermore.

32 They angered Him also at the waters of strife : so that He punished Moses for their sakes ;

33 Because they provoked his spirit : so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

34 Neither destroyed they the heathen : as the Lord commanded them ;

35 But were mingled among the heathen : and learned their works.

36 Insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which turned to their own decay : yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils ;

37 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters : whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan ; and the land was defiled with blood.

38 Thus were they stained with their own works : and went a whoring with their own inventions.

39 Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people : insomuch that He abhorred his own inheritance.

40 And he gave them over into the hand of the

judge, and, by slaying those who had incurred the penalty of death through violation of the Mosaic law, stayed the plague. Numb. xxv. 7, 8.

31. *For righteousness*] As deserving God's favour and blessing. Phinehas, because he was zealous for the Lord's sake, received the promise of an everlasting priesthood in his family. Numb. xxv. 11—13.

— *Among all posterities*] “Unto all generations.”

32. *The waters of strife*] The waters of Meribah. Numb. xx. 13. See Ps. lxxxi. 8, and note.

33. *Unadvisedly*] Hotly and rashly, as under provocation. Numb. xx. 10.

34. *Neither destroyed they the heathen*] The Israelites had received the express command of Jehovah, to execute his vengeance on the wicked and idolatrous Canaanites ; but, from fear or worldliness, they spared them, and soon became polluted by their corruptions. See Josh. xvi. 10 ; Judges i. 21, 27—36.

36. *Turned to their own decay*] “Were a snare unto them.”

— *Unto devils*] Demons, the false gods of Canaan. Deut. xii. 31 ; 2 Kings xvii. 17.

38. *Went a whoring*] As a false wife is unfaithful to her husband, so they left the service of the living God, to serve deities of their own imagination. Lev. xx. 5.

40. *He gave them over*] For

heathen : and they that hated them were lords over them.

41 Their enemies oppressed them : and had them in subjection.

42 Many a time did He deliver them : but they rebelled against Him with their own inventions, and were brought down in their wickedness.

43 Nevertheless, when He saw their adversity : He heard their complaint.

44 He thought upon his covenant, and pitied them, according unto the multitude of his mercies : yea, He made all those that led them away captive to pity them.

45 Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen : that we may give thanks unto thy holy Name, and make our boast of thy praise.

46 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and world without end : and let all the people say, Amen.

Morning.]

PSALM CVII.

[*Day 22.*

THE CHURCH'S SONG OF THANKSGIVING.

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious : and his mercy endureth for ever.

their sins and rebellions, He suffered them to be carried away captives to Babylon.

44. *He made all those, &c.*] 'Give them compassion before them who carried them away captive,' was the prayer of king Solomon at the dedication of the Temple. 1 Kings viii. 50.

46. *Blessed be the Lord God*] This doxology closes the fourth Book of the Psalms.

Ps. CVII. suits the time of the return of the Jews from Babylon, *B.C.* 536; and may have been sung at the first celebration of the feast

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of tabernacles after that joyful event. See Ezra iii. 1—6. God's people are exhorted to give thanks for various acts of mercy:—the safe conduct of the way-worn exile to his own home, 4—7; the feeding of the hungry, 9; the deliverance of the captive from bondage, 10—16; the restoration of the sick, 17—20; and the preservation of the storm-tost mariner, 23—30. God's dealings with his people by judgments and mercies, according to their obedience or disobedience, are set forth in verses 33—35; and the concluding verses seem to have

2 Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed : and delivered from the hand of the enemy ;

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west : from the north, and from the south.

4 They went astray in the wilderness out of the way : and found no city to dwell in ;

5 Hungry and thirsty : their soul fainted in them.

6 So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble : and He delivered them from their distress.

7 He led them forth by the right way : that they might go to the city where they dwelt.

8 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men !

9 For He satisfieth the empty soul : and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such as sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death : being fast bound in misery and iron ;

11 Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord : and lightly regarded the counsel of the Most Highest ;

12 He also brought down their heart through heaviness : they fell down, and there was none to help them.

13 So when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble : He delivered them out of their distress.

14 For He brought them out of darkness, and out of the shadow of death : and brake their bonds in sunder.

reference to the restoration of Judah from his long banishment, the rebuilding of their city, the cultivation of their land, and the increase of the people.

3. *Out of the lands*] From the several countries into which they had been carried captive.

7. *The city where they dwell*] A city to dwell in, as at ver. 4.

8. *O that men, &c.*] An invitation to all men to join in thanksgiving for mercies received, forms

the chorus of the song, and is repeated at verses 15, 21 and 31.

9. *With goodness*] With good things. Ps. ciii. 5 ; Luke i. 53.

10. *Sit in darkness*] They who are shut up in a dark dungeon.

— *Fast bound in misery and iron*] Bound with galling chains — the bonds of affliction.

12. *Brought down their heart through heaviness*] 'Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop.' Prov. xii. 25.

15 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men !

16 For He hath broken the gates of brass : and smitten the bars of iron in sunder.

17 Foolish men are plagued for their offence : and because of their wickedness.

18 Their soul abhorred all manner of meat : and they were even hard at death's door.

19 So when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble : He delivered them out of their distress.

20 He sent his word, and healed them : and they were saved from their destruction.

21 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men !

22 That they would offer unto Him the sacrifice of thanksgiving : and tell out his works with gladness !

23 They that go down to the sea in ships : and occupy their business in great waters ;

24 These men see the works of the Lord : and his wonders in the deep.

25 For at his word the stormy wind ariseth : which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep : their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

16. *Hath broken the gates of brass, &c.*] That is, hath overcome the strongest enemies that opposed themselves to the release of his captive people. This may be regarded as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah xlv. 2.

17. *Foolish men*] The ungodly and unbelievers. Refer to Ps. xiv. 1.

18. *Their soul abhorred, &c.*] Their loathing of food is cited in proof of their extreme sickness; yet though they were 'even hard

at death's door,' when they cried unto the Lord He healed them, vv. 19, 20. Compare Matt. viii. 8. 'Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed.'

23—30.] This striking description of a sudden storm at sea, the terror of the ship's crew, their prayer, and their deliverance, has led to the adoption of this Psalm in the 'Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea.'

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man : and are at their wit's end.

28 So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble : He delivereth them out of their distress.

29 For He maketh the storm to cease : so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad, because they are at rest : and so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

31 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men !

32 That they would exalt Him also in the congregation of the people : and praise Him in the seat of the elders !

33 Who turneth the floods into a wilderness : and drieth up the water-springs.

34 A fruitful land maketh He barren : for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 Again, He maketh the wilderness a standing water : and water-springs of a dry ground.

36 And there He setteth the hungry : that they may build them a city to dwell in ;

37 That they may sow their land, and plant vineyards : to yield them fruits of increase.

38 He blesseth them, so that they multiply exceedingly : and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 And again, when they are minished, and brought low : through oppression, through any plague or trouble ;

29. *He maketh the storm to cease, &c.*] The power here attributed to God, that of calming the storm, was exercised by Christ in one of his recorded miracles. See Matt. viii. 28.

30. *The haven*] The harbour or port.

32. *Seat of the elders*] The council of governors and judges.

33. *The floods*] " Rivers."

34. *A fruitful land, &c.*] Compare Isaiah xxxii. 13—18. In the moral government of his ancient people the Israelites, the Almighty acted by means of *temporal* rewards and punishments, sending upon their land fertility or barrenness, according as they served him faithfully, or transgressed his laws. Isa. xxxii. 13—19.

39. *Minished*] Or, as we now

40 Though He suffer them to be evil intreated through tyrants : and let them wander out of the way in the wilderness ;

41 Yet helpeth He the poor out of misery : and maketh him households like a flock of sheep.

42 The righteous will consider this, and rejoice : and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped.

43 Whoso is wise will ponder these things : and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

Evening.]

PSALM CVIII.

[Day 22.]

THE CONQUEROR'S SONG OF TRIUMPH.

Proper Psalm for Ascension Day.

O GOD, my heart is ready, my heart is ready : I will sing and give praise with the best member that I have.

2 Awake, thou lute, and harp : I myself will awake right early.

3 I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the people : I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations.

4 For thy mercy is greater than the heavens : and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.

5 Set up Thyself, O God, above the heavens : and thy glory above all the earth.

6 That thy beloved may be delivered : let thy right hand save them, and hear Thou me.

say, diminished, reduced. Psalm xii. 1.

40. *Though He suffer*] The Bible rendering is more commonly received: "He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way." These words are taken from Job xii. 21 and 24.

41. *Maketh him households*] *Increase* and *multiplieth* their

families. 'They send forth their little ones like a flock.' Job xxi. 11.

Ps. CVIII. is made up of two others. The first five verses are almost word for word the same as the last five of Ps. lvii., and the last eight are the same as verses 5—12 of Ps. lx.; to which refer for notes.

4. *Is greater than the heavens*] Compare Ps. ciii. 11.

7 God hath spoken in his holiness : I will rejoice therefore, and divide Sichem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

8 Gilead is mine, and Manasses is mine : Ephraim also is the strength of my head.

9 Judah is my law-giver, Moab is my wash-pot : over Edom will I cast out my shoe ; upon Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who will lead me into the strong city : and who will bring me into Edom ?

11 Hast not Thou forsaken us, O God : and wilt not Thou, O God, go forth with our hosts ?

12 O help us against the enemy : for vain is the help of man.

13 Through God we shall do great acts : and it is He that shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM CIX.

GOD'S JUDGMENTS AGAINST HIS ENEMIES.

HOLD not thy tongue, O God of my praise : for the mouth of the ungodly, yea, the mouth of the deceitful is opened upon me.

2 And they have spoken against me with false tongues : they compassed me about also with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.

3 For the love that I had unto them, lo, they take now my contrary part : but I give myself unto prayer.

Ps. CIX.—“ A Psalm of David,” written probably at a time when he was suffering from the malice and animosity of Saul, who thus returned evil for good. For an answer to the objections commonly made to this Psalm, as exhibiting a vindictive and unforgiving spirit, see note on ver. 5.

1. *Hold not thy tongue*] Hear not in silence the false accusations

of my enemies.

1. *God of my praise*] Object of my praise, Thou who hast given me such abundant cause to bless and praise Thee.

3. *For the love*] In return for the love.

— *My contrary part*] The side opposed to me ; they are become my enemies.

4 Thus have they rewarded me evil for good : and hatred for my good will.

5 Set Thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him : and let Satan stand at his right hand.

6 When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned : and let his prayer be turned into sin.

7 Let his days be few : and let another take his office.

8 Let his children be fatherless : and his wife a widow.

9 Let his children be vagabonds, and beg their bread : let them seek it also out of desolate places.

5. *Set Thou, &c.*] The prayer of David, in this and the following verses, is that God would assert and vindicate the divine justice in the punishment of his rebellious enemies. It must be borne in mind that, under the Mosaic law, rewards and punishments were strictly *temporal*. If the wilful and malicious adversaries of Jehovah remained unpunished, it might be said that He wanted the power to inflict the penalties denounced in his own law, and the impunity of the ungodly would thus become a stumbling-block to the pious Israelite. David, therefore, is not giving expression to his own private feelings of hatred or revenge ; but, as a minister and prophet of the Most High, he calls upon Him to assert his own sovereignty, and not suffer his law to be set at nought. He appeals to the God of justice to execute on hardened and impenitent sinners the sentence solemnly pronounced against them by the mouth of his servant Moses (Deut. xxviii. 15 to the end). No one who believes that the God of all the earth will do right, needs scruple to use the inspired words of the Psalmist, if only he use them, not as his private wish and prayer, but as a *humble acknowledgment*

that 'the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' Rom. i. 18. We must remember that the divine justice has lost none of its vigour under the new covenant, but that he who despises the far richer means of grace which are there offered, will suffer a far sorer punishment than he who was condemned under the law of Moses. Heb. x. 26, 27 ; xii. 25.

5. *Ruler*] Rather, perhaps, judge.

— *Let Satan*] Let an adversary and accuser stand (as was the custom in a court of justice) at his right. See Zech. iii. 1 ; Rev. xii. 9, 10. This is the only place in the Psalms in which the name of the prince of evil spirits is mentioned.

6. *When sentence is given*] When he is judged.

— *Let his prayer, &c.*] Not his prayer to God ; but let his plea and entreaty to his earthly judge be regarded as an aggravation of his offence.

7. *Let another take*] This is quoted by St. Peter as prophetic of the traitor Judas. Acts i. 20.

9—11. *Let his children, &c.*] It would seem as if the condition of the Jewish people, wanderers upon the face of the earth, and so often

10 Let the extortioner consume all that he hath : and let the stranger spoil his labour.

11 Let there be no man to pity him : nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children.

12 Let his posterity be destroyed : and in the next generation let his name be clean put out.

13 Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord : and let not the sin of his mother be done away.

14 Let them alway be before the Lord : that He may root out the memorial of them from off the earth ;

15 And that, because his mind was not to do good : but persecuted the poor helpless man that he might slay him that was vexed at the heart.

16 His delight was in cursing, and it shall happen unto him : he loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him.

17 He clothed himself with cursing, like as with a raiment : and it shall come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

18 Let it be unto him as the cloke that he hath upon him : and as the girdle that he is alway girded withal.

19 Let it thus happen from the Lord unto mine enemies : and to those that speak evil against my soul.

20 But deal Thou with me, O Lord God, according unto thy Name : for sweet is thy mercy.

the victims of oppression and injustice, were prophetically foreshewn in these verses.

9. *Out of desolate places*] In a land laid waste by the enemy.

12. *Let his posterity, &c.*] The Jews, as a people and kingdom, were doomed to ruin and dispersion. 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.' Matt. xxiii. 38. See also Ps. lxi. 29; Prov. x. 7.

13. *Let the wickedness, &c.*] God has declared that He will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children; see Exod. xx. 5, and compare Neh. iv. 5; Jer. xviii. 28.

14. *Let them, &c.*] Let the wickedness and sin of his parents, &c.

15. *But persecuted*] This clause is translated by Dr. Kay, 'But persecuted the poor and needy man, even the broken-hearted, (and that) to death.'

17. *He clothed himself, &c.*] How fearfully has the awful imprecation, 'His blood be on us and on our children,' descended upon the Jewish people, since their fathers cried out for the blood of Jesus!

— *Like water...like oil*] That is, it shall affect him not merely on the surface, but penetrate into his inner frame.

21 O deliver me, for I am helpless and poor : and my heart is wounded within me.

22 I go hence like the shadow that departeth : and am driven away as the grasshopper.

23 My knees are weak through fasting : my flesh is dried up for want of fatness.

24 I became also a reproach unto them : they that looked upon me shook their heads.

25 Help me, O Lord my God : O save me according to thy mercy ;

26 And they shall know, how that this is thy hand : and that Thou, Lord, hast done it.

27 Though they curse, yet bless Thou : and let them be confounded that rise up against me ; but let thy servant rejoice.

28 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame : and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a cloke.

29 As for me, I will give great thanks unto the Lord with my mouth : and praise Him among the multitude ;

30 For He shall stand at the right hand of the poor : to save his soul from unrighteous judges.

Morning.]

PSALM CX.

[*Day 23.*

CHRIST SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER.

Proper Psalm for Christmas Day.

THE Lord said unto my Lord : 'Sit Thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.'

22. *Like the shadow, &c.]* We have already had the same image in Ps. cii. 11.

— *The grasshopper]* The locust; insects which are swept off in a moment, whole swarms of them together, by the wind. Exod. x. 19.

24. *Shook their heads]* These words bring before us the awful scene of the crucifixion. Compare Ps. xxii. 7; Matt. xxvii. 39.

26. *And they shall know, &c.]* My enemies shall be taught that I owe my deliverance and safety to the protection of thy mighty hand.

30. *At the right hand, &c.]* The Lord shall occupy the place of advocate or champion, at the right hand of the poor. Ps. cxxi. 5.

Ps. CX.—We know from our Lord's own words, (Matt. xxii.

2 The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion : be Thou ruler, even in the midst among thine enemies.

3 In the day of thy power shall the people offer Thee free-will offerings with an holy worship : the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.

4 The Lord sware, and will not repent : 'Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.'

41—45,) that this Psalm was written by David, and addressed to the Messiah. The Psalm consists of the divine decree constituting our Lord Jesus Christ: 1, Universal Sovereign, triumphant over all his enemies; and, 2, an Everlasting Priest and Head of the Church.

1. *The Lord said, &c.*] God the Father said to the everlasting Son, who is Lord of all, yet Son of David, because born of his lineage according to the flesh. Acts ii. 34, 35; Rom. ix. 5; Heb. i. 13.

— *Sit Thou on my right hand, until, &c.*] 'He (the Messiah) must reign, till He (God the Father) hath put all enemies under his (the Messiah's) feet.' 1 Cor. xv. 25.

2. *The rod of thy power*] The emblem and instrument of victory and conquest. The universal dominion of Christ was to proceed from Jerusalem as a centre. 'Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' Isa. ii. 3.

3. *In the day of thy power*] In the day when Thou goest forth as a conqueror to subdue thine enemies, the people shall willingly offer themselves. Judges v. 2. The higher spiritual meaning is, that, on the establishment of Christ's kingdom, his people should eagerly seek admission into it, and yield themselves freely to the service of their Lord. Isa. lv. 5. Compare

Acts ii. 41, and refer to the language of the first thanksgiving prayer in the Communion Service: 'We offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee.'

3. *With an holy worship*] Or, in holy garments. The combatants here are the priests, arrayed in their sacred vestments, and carrying on a holy war, under the Messiah, their great High Priest, against the world and the devil.

— *The dew of thy birth*] 'From the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of thy youth.' The meaning seems to be this: 'Thy children shall equal in number and beauty the drops of morning dew. The words are considered by the Fathers and some modern commentators to refer to the Nativity of our Lord Himself.

4. *The Lord sware, &c.*] The Lord hath appointed, by a solemn and unalterable decree, his Son, Messiah, to be not only the universal King, but the everlasting Priest, who 'ever liveth to make intercession for us.' Read Heb. ch. vii. By the law of Moses, the same person could not be both king and priest, but Christ was foretold as filling both offices. 'He shall be a priest upon his throne.' Zech. vi. 13.

— *The order of Melchisedech*] Not a priest of the tribe of Levi, to

5 The Lord upon thy right hand : shall wound even kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen ; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies : and smite in sunder the heads over divers countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook in the way : therefore shall He lift up his head.

PSALM CXI.

THE FAITHFULNESS OF JEHOVAH TO HIS COVENANT.

Proper Psalm for Easter Day.

I WILL give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart : secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation.

2 The works of the Lord are great : sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His work is worthy to be praised, and had in honour : and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done his

minister in a temporary dispensation, and a church which was to pass away, but a priest after the type of One who is recorded as having neither beginning nor ending ; that is, a priest abiding for ever ; our great High Priest, 'who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's ; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself,' Heb. vii. 27. Refer to Gen. xiv. 18.

5. *The Lord upon thy right hand*] Messiah, seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, shall in 'the day of his wrath,' smite down and destroy the mightiest kings and rulers that set themselves against Him. Refer to Ps. ii.

6. *Shall judge among the heathen*] Shall execute judgment upon the nations which resist Him.

— *Shall fill the places*] Shall

strew the heathen lands with the carcases of the slain, and *smite in sunder the heads*, that is, the chiefs, or princes, *over divers countries*.

7. *He shall drink*] He shall refresh Himself, recruit his strength in his career of victory, while hot in pursuit of his enemies, and so shall be triumphant and exalted over all. Compare Judg. xv. 18, 19.

Ps. CXI. seems designed to strengthen the trust of the Israelites in God's promises, by reminding them of his mighty works on their behalf in the old time : of the manna in the wilderness (5) ; the inheritance of Canaan (6) ; and the return from captivity (9).

2. *Sought out of all them, &c.*] Made the subject of study and contemplation by all who take pleasure in them.

4. *Hath so done, &c.*] Hath

marvellous works : that they ought to be had in remembrance.

5 He hath given meat unto them that fear Him : He shall ever be mindful of his covenant.

6 He hath shewed his people the power of his works : that He may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The works of his hands are verity and judgment : all his commandments are true.

8 They stand fast for ever and ever : and are done in truth and equity.

9 He sent redemption unto his people : He hath commanded his covenant for ever ; holy and reverend is his Name.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom : a good understanding have all they that do thereafter ; the praise of it endureth for ever.

PSALM CXII.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE GODLY.

BLESSED is the man that feareth the Lord : he hath great delight in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth : the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.

3 Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house : and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness : he is merciful, loving, and righteous.

made a memorial for Himself in his marvellous works.

7. *The works of his hands, &c.*] All the works of the Lord are stamped with truth and justice. His commands may be obeyed with a full confidence in his approval and support. Deut. xxx. 4.

9. *Hath commanded his covenant, &c.*] He ordained his covenant for ever.

10. *The praise of it*] "His praise endureth for ever."

Ps. CXII.—Some of the principal blessings which are vouchsafed to the servant of the Lord, are here set forth. A prosperous family (2); an abundant store (3); comfort in trouble and affliction (4).

1. *He hath great delight*] "That delighteth greatly."

4. *Unto the godly, &c.*] Refer

5 A good man is merciful, and lendeth : and will guide his words with discretion.

6 For he shall never be moved : and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

7 He will not be afraid of any evil tidings : for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord.

8 His heart is established, and will not shrink : until he see his desire upon his enemies.

9 He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor : and his righteousness remaineth for ever ; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The ungodly shall see it, and it shall grieve him : he shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away ; the desire of the ungodly shall perish.

PSALM CXIII.

GOD'S POWER AND CONDESCENSION.

Proper Psalm for Easter Day.

PRAISE the Lord, ye servants : O praise the Name of the Lord.

2 Blessed be the Name of the Lord : from this time forth for evermore.

to Psalm xcvi. 11, and the note. See also Job. xi. 17.

5. *A good man, &c.*] Rather, Blessed is the man who is compassionate and lendeth.

— *Will guide his words, &c.*] The Bible Version is, "He will guide his affairs with discretion."

8. *Until he see*] He waiteth without fear, till he witnesses the overthrow of his enemies.

9. *Hath dispersed abroad*] Hath distributed largely and liberally to the wants of others.

— *His horn shall be exalted, &c.*] His name and character shall become great in men's esteem.

10. *Shall gnash with his teeth*] A picture of the rage and mortifi-

cation of the ungodly at the prosperity of the righteous. Matt. viii. 12 ; Luke xiii. 28.

— *The desire of the ungodly*] The object of his desire ; that on which he had set his heart. 'The expectation of the wicked shall perish.' Prov. x. 28.

Psalms CXIII.—CXVIII. make up the greater Hallel (or Office of Praise) sung at the great annual festivals of the Jews. It is commonly supposed to have been a portion of these Psalms that our Saviour and his disciples sang after the Passover and Last Supper. Matt. xxvi. 30 ; Mark xiv. 26.

1. *Ye servants*] "Praise, O ye

3 The Lord's Name is praised : from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same.

4 The Lord is high above all heathen : and his glory above the heavens.

5 Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath his dwelling so high : and yet humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth ?

6 He taketh up the simple out of the dust : and lifteth the poor out of the mire ;

7 That He may set him with the princes : even with the princes of his people.

8 He maketh the barren woman to keep house : and to be a joyful mother of children.

Evening.]

PSALM CXIV.

[Day 23.

THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT.

Proper Psalm for Easter Day.

WHEN Israel came out of Egypt : and the house of Jacob from among the strange people,

servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord." "The servants" of the Lord are the righteous men who fear and serve Him.

3. *Is praised*] rather, "Is to be praised," or praised *be* the name of the Lord from east to west; that is, from one end of the world to the other.

4. *All heathen*] "All nations."

5. *Yet humbleth Himself*] "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him, also, that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Compare Phil. ii. 7, 8.

7. *May set him, &c.*] Make him sit, as equal and companion, with princes. Part of this verse, and the whole of the preceding one,

occur in Hannah's song of thanksgiving. 1 Sam. ii. 8. See also Luke i. 52.

8. *Maketh the barren woman*] Under the figure of a family being born to a woman who was before childless, is shewn the increase which was to be given to the Church by the bringing in of the Gentiles. See Isa. liv. 1; lxvi. 8; Gal. iv. 27.

Ps. CXIV.—This Psalm seems intended to sustain the faith of the Israelites in their Almighty Protector, by reminding them of the miracles by which He rescued their fathers from Egypt, brought them in safety through the wilderness, and finally planted them in the land which He had promised to Abraham about four hundred years before. By appointing this Psalm to be read on

2 Judah was his sanctuary : and Israel his dominion.

3 The sea saw that, and fled : Jordan was driven back.

4 The mountains skipped like rams : and the little hills like young sheep.

5 What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest : and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back ?

6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams : and ye little hills, like young sheep ?

7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord : at the presence of the God of Jacob ;

8 Who turned the hard rock into a standing water : and the flint-stone into a spring well.

PSALM CXV.

THE GOD OF ISRAEL AND THE IDOLS OF THE HEATHEN.

NOT unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the praise : for thy loving mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

Easter Day, the Church teaches us that the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt is a type of our redemption from the bondage of sin and death by Jesus Christ.

1. *The strange people*] "A people of strange language."

2. *Judah was his sanctuary*] Judah here represents the whole people, among whom God condescended to dwell, as in his sanctuary.

3. *The sea saw that, &c.*] The Red Sea and the river Jordan acknowledged the presence of their Creator, and divided, to make a way for his chosen people to pass over. Exod. xiv. 21; Josh. iii. 17.

4. *The mountains skipped, &c.*] When Jehovah descended in fire on Mount Sinai, 'the whole mount trembled greatly.' Exod. xix. 18. In the Song of Deborah, (Judges v. 4), it is said, 'Lord, when Thou wentest out of Seir, when Thou

marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped.'

5. *What aileth thee, &c.*] In the bold language of poetry the sea and the mountains are invited to confess the supreme power of God over them.

8. *Who turned, &c.*] Refer to Exod. xvii. 6; Numb. xx. 11.

Ps. CXV. seems to have been written at a time—probably after the Captivity—when the Israelites, reduced in number and weakened in power, were exposed to the insulting taunts of their heathen enemies. Its object is to sustain the courage and confirm the faith of the chosen people, by contrasting the power and majesty of the God of Heaven, whom they served, with the senseless idols—the work of men's hands—which were worshipped by the heathen.

1. *Give the praise*] "Give glory."

2 Wherefore shall the heathen say : 'Where is now their God ?'

3 As for our God, he is in heaven : He hath done whatsoever pleased Him.

4 Their idols are silver and gold : even the work of men's hands.

5 They have mouths, and speak not : eyes have they, and see not.

6 They have ears, and hear not : noses have they, and smell not.

7 They have hands, and handle not ; feet have they, and walk not : neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that make them are like unto them : and so are all such as put their trust in them.

9 But thou, house of Israel, trust thou in the Lord : He is their succour and defence.

10 Ye house of Aaron, put your trust in the Lord : He is their helper and defender.

11 Ye that fear the Lord, put your trust in the Lord : He is their helper and defender.

12 The Lord hath been mindful of us, and He shall bless us : even He shall bless the house of Israel, He shall bless the house of Aaron.

13 He shall bless them that fear the Lord : both small and great.

14 The Lord shall increase you more and more : you and your children.

God is called upon to make an open manifestation of his power and glory ; not, however, for the sake of the people, who did not deserve his favour, but for his own Name's sake. *Ezek. xxxvi. 22.*

2. *Wherefore shall*] This question is repeated from Ps. lxxix. 10. While the Israelites were in trouble and adversity, the heathen would ask, in scorn and derision, where was the God in whom they trusted for victory and deliverance.

3. *As for our God*] The answer

is, The God of Israel is in heaven, exalted far above all in place and power. He hath indeed afflicted us, and suffered us to be carried away into captivity ; but He hath, in his good pleasure, humbled our enemies, and restored us again to our own land.

4. *Their idols*] The contrast follows of the heathen deities, gods of wood or stone, the work of men's hands ; deaf and dumb, sightless and motionless idols. See *Dent. iv. 28 ; Isa. xlii. 8-20 ; Jer. x. 5.*

15 Ye are the blessed of the Lord : who made heaven and earth.

16 All the whole heavens are the Lord's : the earth hath He given to the children of men.

17 The dead praise not Thee, O Lord : neither all they that go down into silence.

18 But we will praise the Lord : from this time forth for evermore. Praise the Lord.

Morning.]

PSALM CXVI.

[Day 24.]

THE BELIEVER'S THANKSGIVING FOR MERCIES.

I AM well pleased : that the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer.

2 That He hath inclined his ear unto me : therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.

3 The snares of death compassed me round about : and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.

4 I shall find trouble and heaviness, and I will call upon the name of the Lord : 'O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul.'

5 Gracious is the Lord, and righteous : yea, our God is merciful.

6 The Lord preserveth the simple : I was in misery, and He helped me.

16. *The earth hath He given]* Jehovah hath chosen the heavens for his glorious abode, and in his goodness hath created the earth for man, who is therefore required to bless and praise Him in it.

17. *The dead praise not]* The connexion seems to be this : God requires praise upon earth, as well as in Heaven. He will not therefore suffer his servants, who are ready to offer it, to be extirpated by their enemies, but will preserve a remnant to serve Him. Compare Ps. lxxxviii. 10 ; cxviii. 17 ; and Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

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Ps. CXVI.—This Psalm, which seems to express the overflowing gratitude of the Psalmist, or other individual believer, for some signal mercy or deliverance, is used in our Church in the 'Thanksgiving of Women after Child-birth.'

1. *I am well pleased, &c.]* The more exact rendering is, I love, because the Lord hears my voice and my supplications.

3. *The pains of hell]* The bands of the grave. See Ps. xviii. 4.

4. *I shall find]* "I found trouble and sorrow, then called I upon the name of the Lord."

7 Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul : for the Lord hath rewarded thee.

8 And why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death : mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the Lord : in the land of the living.

10 I believed, and therefore will I speak ; but I was sore troubled : I said in my haste, 'All men are liars.'

11 What reward shall I give unto the Lord : for all the benefits that He hath done unto me?

12 I will receive the cup of salvation : and call upon the Name of the Lord.

13 I will pay my vows now in the presence of all his people : right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

14 Behold, O Lord, how that I am thy servant : I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid ; Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder.

7. *Turn again then unto thy rest, &c.*] Dismiss thy over-anxious thoughts, and return to thy former quiet trust in God's mercy.

— *Hath rewarded thee*] "Hath dealt bountifully with thee."

9. *I will walk before the Lord, &c.*] I will walk in the ways of the Lord, and as in his sight, all the days of my life upon earth.

10. *Therefore will I speak*] "Therefore have I spoken." I believed in God's promises, and therefore offered up my prayer unto Him.

— *I said in my haste, &c.*] In my trepidation and flight I said, No confidence can be reposed in man ; all men are false, and God alone is to be trusted. See Ps. cxviii. 8.

11. *What reward*] "What shall I render unto the Lord?" What return shall I make to God, for the mercies which He has vouchsafed to me?

12. *The cup of salvation*] Compare Ps. xvi. 6. Allusion is probably made to a practice among the

Jews of taking, at their feasts, a cup of wine, and solemnly acknowledging, with thanksgiving, any special mercy which they had received. It seems to have been in observance of this custom that our Lord 'took the cup and gave thanks,' at the last celebration of the Passover, Luke xxii. 17. Refer for the law of the Jewish drink offering to Num. xxviii. 7 ; but consider that the cup of the Holy Communion is the appropriate thank-offering, or Eucharist, of Christians.

13. *My vows*] The vows which I made in danger or sickness.

— *Right dear, &c.*] God sets such value on the life of his servants, that He will not abandon them to their enemies, nor suffer them to be cut off before their time. Ps. lxxii. 14. The Psalmist, therefore, persuaded that he owed his life to God's providential care and protection, offers up to Him the grateful sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. vv. 15, 16.

15 I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving : and will call upon the Name of the Lord.

16 I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the sight of all his people : in the courts of the Lord's house, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord.

PSALM CXVII.

CALL UPON THE HEATHEN TO PRAISE JEHOVAH.

O PRAISE the Lord, all ye heathen : praise Him, all ye nations.

2 For his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us : and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise the Lord.

PSALM CXVIII.

SONG OF NATIONAL THANKSGIVING.

Proper Psalm for Easter Day.

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious : because his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let Israel now confess, that He is gracious : and that his mercy endureth for ever.

3 Let the house of Aaron now confess : that his mercy endureth for ever.

Ps. CXVII. is regarded by some as a doxology, and may, perhaps, have been used at the close of the Temple service. The first verse is quoted by St. Paul, (Rom. xv. 11,) as an intimation of God's purpose to bring the Gentiles into the Church.

Ps. CXVIII. appears to suit almost equally the time when David was anointed king over Israel at Hebron (2 Sam. v.), and the period of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. It is, indeed, a most appropriate Psalm of thanksgiving on various occasions. Luther's words are too remarkable not to be

quoted : 'This is my Psalm, the one which I love. Although the whole Psalter, and indeed the whole Sacred Volume, is dear to me, as that which is my only consolation and my life, yet I am particularly pleased with this Psalm ; so that it must be called and must be *mine*, for it has often served me well, and has helped me out of many great troubles.'

1. *His mercy endureth for ever*] 'And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, because He is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel.' Ezra iii. 11.

4 Yea, let them now that fear the Lord confess : that his mercy endureth for ever.

5 I called upon the Lord in trouble : and the Lord heard me at large.

6 The Lord is on my side : I will not fear what man doeth unto me.

7 The Lord taketh my part with them that help me : therefore shall I see my desire upon mine enemies.

8 It is better to trust in the Lord : than to put any confidence in man.

9 It is better to trust in the Lord : than to put any confidence in princes.

10 All nations compassed me round about : but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them.

11 They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side : but in the Name of the Lord will I destroy them.

12 They came about me like bees, and are extinct even as the fire among the thorns : for in the Name of the Lord I will destroy them.

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall : but the Lord was my help.

14 The Lord is my strength, and my song : and is become my salvation.

15 The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings

4. *Them that fear the Lord*] This phrase would seem to comprehend other worshippers than those who were of the *house of Aaron*, or even of the people of *Israel*;—all such, indeed, of whatever family or race, as feared and worshipped the true God. Ps. xxii. 23. Compare Acts xvi. 14; xviii. 7.

5. *Heard me at large*] “The Lord answered me, and set me in a large place;” *i.e.* delivered me from my strait or difficulty. See Ps. xviii. 19; xxxi. 9; cxix. 32, 45.

6. *I will not fear what man, &c.*]

“I will not fear: what can man do unto me?” Rom. viii. 31.

10. *All nations*] All the heathen nations round about encompassed me. Zech. xii. 3.

— *In the name of the Lord*] By the power and authority of Jehovah.

12. *Are extinct*] Are extinguished as rapidly as a blaze of fire among thorns. Eccl. vii. 6.

13. *Thou*] The Psalmist here addresses his enemy.

14. *My song*] The subject of my praise. This verse will be found also in Exod. xv. 2.

of the righteous : the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

16 The right hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence : the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

17 I shall not die, but live : and declare the works of the Lord.

18 The Lord hath chastened and corrected me : but He hath not given me over unto death.

19 Open me the gates of righteousness : that I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord : the righteous shall enter into it.

21 I will thank Thee, for Thou hast heard me : and art become my salvation.

22 The same stone which the builders refused : is become the head-stone in the corner.

23 This is the Lord's doing : and it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 This is the day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Help me now, O Lord : O Lord, send us now prosperity.

26 Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord : we have wished you good luck, ye that are of the house of the Lord.

27 God is the Lord who hath shewed us light :

16. *Pre-eminence*] The superiority and rule over others.

19. *The gates of righteousness*] The gates of the Lord's sanctuary.

22. *The same stone, &c.*] This figure or proverb is claimed by our Lord as applicable to Himself. Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10; Luke xx. 17. It is quoted also in the same sense by St. Peter (Acts iv. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 7), and by St. Paul (Ephes. ii. 20). Refer also to Isa. xxviii. 16.

24. *The day which the Lord hath*

made] The day of the celebration of Israel's triumph, and, to us, the day of our Lord's triumph over the grave. Neh. viii. 9, 10.

25. *Help me now*] Here, and in verse 26, we have the words used by the multitudes who welcomed our Lord into Jerusalem; for 'Hosanna' signifies, Help us now—save us—send us prosperity. Matt. xxi. 9, and compare Ps. xx. 9.

27. *Hath shewed us light*] Hath shone upon us, and hath lifted up

bind the sacrifice with cords, yea, even unto the horns of the altar.

28 Thou art my God, and I will thank Thee : Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee.

29 O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious : and his mercy endureth for ever.

Evening.]

PSALM CXIX.

[Day 24.

THE EXCELLENCY OF GOD'S WORD.

ALEPH.

BLESSED are those that are undefiled in the way : and walk in the law of the Lord.

2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies : and seek Him with their whole heart.

3 For they who do no wickedness : walk in his ways.

4 Thou hast charged : that we shall diligently keep thy commandments.

5 O that my ways were made so direct : that I might keep thy statutes !

the light of his countenance upon us, during our night of darkness and misery.

27. *Bind the sacrifice*] Fasten to the horns of the altar (Exod. xxvii. 2) the victim whose blood is to be sprinkled upon it.

Ps. CXIX.—The subject of this Psalm, from beginning to end, is the excellency of God's Word; the blessedness of those who observe, and the misery of those who disregard it. The Word of God is spoken of under various terms, as Law, Testimonies, Commandments, Statutes, Precepts, Judgments, Ordinances, Ceremonies, Truth, Way, Righteousness; and one or other of these terms is found in every verse, except the 122d. The Psalm is

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divided into twenty-two equal portions, that being the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. To each portion its own letter is prefixed, and every verse in that portion commences with that same letter.

1. *Undefiled in the way*] Pure and blameless in their way of life.

2. *Testimonies* are laws bearing witness to the holiness of God, and his condemnation of sin.

3. *For they who do, &c.*] "They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways." 1 John v. 18.

4. *Thou hast charged*] "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently."

5. *Made so direct, &c.*] "Were directed to keep thy statutes." This is a prayer for Divine guidance and grace. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

6 So shall I not be confounded : while I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 I will thank Thee with an unfeigned heart : when I shall have learned the judgments of thy righteousness.

8 I will keep thy ceremonies : O forsake me not utterly.

BETH.

WHEREWITHAL shall a young man cleanse his way : even by ruling himself after thy word.

10 With my whole heart have I sought Thee : O let me not go wrong out of thy commandments.

11 Thy words have I hid within my heart : that I should not sin against Thee.

12 Blessed art Thou, O Lord : O teach me thy statutes.

13 With my lips have I been telling : of all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I have had as great delight in the way of thy testimonies : as in all manner of riches.

15 I will talk of thy commandments : and have respect unto thy ways.

16 My delight shall be in thy statutes : and I will not forget thy word.

GIMEL.

O DO well unto thy servant : that I may live, and keep thy word.

18 Open Thou mine eyes : that I may see the wondrous things of thy law.

6. *Confounded*] Exposed to shame and reproach.

7. *Judgments of thy righteousness*] "Thy righteous judgments."

8. *Thy ceremonies*] "Thy statutes." The laws and ordinances which Thou hast decreed.

9. *After thy word*] After, according to. See Ps. xc. 15 ; ciii. 10, and notes.

The Psalmist points out the devout study of God's Word as the best guide and rule of youth.

10. *Go wrong out of, &c.*] "Wander from thy commandments."

11. *Thy words have I hid, &c.*] As my most precious treasure. Compare Luke ii. 51.

18. *Open Thou mine eyes, &c.*] The need of God's enlightening

19 I am a stranger upon earth : O hide not thy commandments from me.

20 My soul breaketh out for the very fervent desire : that it hath alway unto thy judgments.

21 Thou hast rebuked the proud : and cursed are they that do err from thy commandments.

22 O turn from me shame and rebuke : for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 Princes also did sit and speak against me : but thy servant is occupied in thy statutes.

24 For thy testimonies are my delight : and my counsellors.

DALETH.

MY soul cleaveth to the dust : O quicken Thou me, according to thy word.

26 I have acknowledged my ways, and Thou heardest me : O teach me thy statutes.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy commandments : and so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My soul melteth away for very heaviness : comfort Thou me according unto thy word.

29 Take from me the way of lying : and cause Thou me to make much of thy law.

Spirit, to enable us see his works and ways aright, is strikingly shown by St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 9—14.

19. *I am a stranger, &c.*] The Psalmist compares himself to a traveller in an unknown country, who has lost his way, and seeks a guide to put him in the right direction. See Heb. xi. 13—15.

20. *My soul breaketh out*] My spirit is broken.

21. *Thou hast rebuked, &c.*] Thou hast rebuked the proud, the accursed ones, who wander from thy commandments.

23. *Princes also did sit, &c.*] While chiefs and mighty men conspired against me, I turned for comfort, support, and guidance, to thy word

and promises. Ps. l. 20.

25. *My soul cleaveth*] I am bowed down to the earth by trouble and heaviness of soul. See Ps. xliv. 25. The reader will call to mind the words of our Lord, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.' Matt. xxvi. 38.

— *O quicken Thou me*] That is, give me new life.

26. *Have acknowledged my ways*] I have made confession of my troubles, wants, and purposes.

27. *And so shall I talk*] Rather, 'And I will meditate on.'

29. *The way of lying*] The falsehood and treachery of the wicked is contrasted with 'the way of truth,' (verse 30), that is, with a faithful

30 I have chosen the way of truth : and thy judgments have I laid before me.

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies : O Lord, confound me not.

32 I will run the way of thy commandments : when Thou hast set my heart at liberty.

Morning.]

HE.

[*Day 25.*

TEACH me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes : and I shall keep it unto the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law : yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments : for therein is my desire.

36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies : and not to covetousness.

37 O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity : and quicken Thou me in thy way.

38 O stablish thy word in thy servant : that I may fear Thee.

39 Take away the rebuke that I am afraid of : for thy judgments are good.

40 Behold, my delight is in thy commandments : O quicken me in thy righteousness.

VAU.

LET thy loving mercy come also unto me, O Lord : even thy salvation, according unto thy word.

42 So shall I make answer unto my blasphemers : for my trust is in thy word.

adherence to God's commandments. See Deut. xxx. 19 ; Josh. xxiv. 15.

32. *Set my heart at liberty*] When Thou hast given enlargement and freedom to my heart by filling it with the love of thy truth and righteousness. John viii. 32.

37. *Behold vanity*] Become fascinated by the false and hollow ways of the world.

38. *O stablish thy word, &c.*] The meaning of this verse is, Confirm to me, thy servant, the promise which Thou hast made to them that love and fear Thee.

39. *Take away the rebuke, &c.*] Turn away from me the shame and sin of forsaking thy law, which is just and holy.

42. *So shall I make answer unto*

43 O take not the word of thy truth utterly out of my mouth : for my hope is in thy judgments.

44 So shall I alway keep thy law : yea, for ever and ever.

45 And I will walk at liberty : for I seek thy commandments.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also, even before kings : and will not be ashamed.

47 And my delight shall be in thy commandments : which I have loved.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved : and my study shall be in thy statutes.

ZAIN.

O THINK upon thy servant, as concerning thy word : wherein Thou hast caused me to put my trust.

50 The same is my comfort in my trouble : for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The proud have had me exceedingly in derision : yet have I not shrunked from thy law.

52 For I remembered thine everlasting judgments, O Lord : and received comfort.

my blasphemers] *Blasphemer* means generally, one who speaks against God and things sacred ; but in this place the Psalmist points to his own false accusers—those who rail at and reproach him ; and to such persons the manifest tokens of God's favour and regard to him would be the most conclusive answer.

43. *Take not the word, &c.*] Deprive me not of the power of answering my accusers by appealing to the fulfilment of thy promises.

45. *Walk at liberty*] Will serve Thee freely, without constraint or hindrance. In the 'Collect for Peace,' God's service is characterised as 'perfect freedom.' 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth

shall make you free.' John viii. 32.

46. *Even before kings*] 'Ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.' Mark xiii. 9.

48. *My hands also, &c.*] i.e. in solemn attestation of sincerity, and steadfastness of purpose.

49. *O think upon, &c.*] "Remember the word" (i.e. thy promise) "unto thy servant."

50. *Hath quickened me*] Hath given me life ; or, as we might say, hath revived me. See ver. 25.

51. *Shrunked*] Swerved, or drawn back from thy law.

52. *Everlasting judgments*] "Thy judgments of old." Rom. xv. 4. Compare also 2 Pet. ii. 4.

53 I am horribly afraid : for the ungodly that forsake thy law.

54 Thy statutes have been my songs : in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 I have thought upon thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season : and have kept thy law.

56 This I had : because I kept thy commandments.

CHETH.

THOU art my portion, O Lord : I have promised to keep thy law.

58 I made my humble petition in thy presence with my whole heart : O be merciful unto me, according to thy word.

59 I called mine own ways to remembrance : and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

60 I made haste, and prolonged not the time : to keep thy commandments.

61 The congregations of the ungodly have robbed me : but I have not forgotten thy law.

62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee : because of thy righteous judgments.

53. *Horribly afraid, &c.*] I tremble to think of the judgments which the wicked are provoking.

54. *The house of my pilgrimage*] or, The house of my sojournings. The meaning of the verse is this :—Thy commandments have been the subject of my songs in all my wanderings from place to place. Life is called a *pilgrimage* in Scripture, Gen. xlvii. 9; and Christians are compared to ‘strangers and pilgrims upon earth.’ 1 Pet. ii. 11. Compare also Ps. cxix. 19.

56. *This I had*] I was sensible of this comfort and satisfaction.

57. *My portion*] That is, my *peculiar possession*;—the good which has fallen to my lot. The

allusion may be to the division of the land of Canaan among the several tribes. See Josh. xvii. 14; xviii. 10. The Lord God was Himself the inheritance, or portion, of the house of Levi. See Josh. xiii. 33; and compare Ps. xvi. 6.

58. *In thy presence*] Rather, for thy presence; that is, to obtain thy favour and countenance. The Bib. Ver. is “I entreated thy favour.”

60. *Prolonged not, &c.*] “Delayed not,” &c.

61. *The congregations, &c.*] “The bands of the wicked.” The meaning seems rather to be, The snares of the wicked surround me, yet still I do not allow such trials and cares to make me unmindful of thy law.

63 I am a companion of all them that fear Thee :
and keep thy commandments.

64 The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy : O teach
me thy statutes.

TETH.

O LORD, Thou hast dealt graciously with thy
servant : according unto thy word.

66 O learn me true understanding and knowledge :
for I have believed thy commandments.

67 Before I was troubled, I went wrong : but now
have I kept thy word.

68 Thou art good and gracious : O teach me thy
statutes.

69 The proud have imagined a lie against me : but
I will keep thy commandments with my whole heart.

70 Their heart is as fat as brawn : but my delight
hath been in thy law.

71 It is good for me that I have been in trouble :
that I may learn thy statutes.

72 The law of thy mouth is dearer unto me : than
thousands of gold and silver.

Evening.

JOD.

[*Day 25.*

THY hands have made me and fashioned me : O
give me understanding, that I may learn thy com-
mandments.

74 They that fear Thee will be glad when they see
me : because I have put my trust in thy word.

66. *I have believed, &c.*] I have
trusted in thy commandments: have
trusted that, in walking according
to them, I was walking in the true
way of holiness and happiness.
Compare Ps. xix. 11; 1 Kings iii. 9.

67. *Before I was troubled, &c.*] For a lesson how God's chastise-
ments are sent in mercy to pro-
mote the spiritual good of man,
see Heb. xii. 1—11.

69. *Imagined a lie*] Invented, or
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forged, a false accusation.

70. *As fat as brawn*] Their heart
has become gross and dull through
excess; they are, as the apostle
says, 'carnal.' Compare Ps. xvii.
10; lxxiii. 7; Isa. vi. 10.

73. *Thy hands have made me, &c.*] Thou, Lord, hast created me
out of the dust of the earth, and
hast made me what I am; vouch-
safe me therefore wisdom to un-
derstand thy law.

75 I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right : and that Thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.

76 O let thy merciful kindness be my comfort : according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 O let thy loving mercies come unto me, that I may live : for thy law is my delight.

78 Let the proud be confounded, for they go wickedly about to destroy me : but I will be occupied in thy commandments.

79 Let such as fear Thee, and have known thy testimonies : be turned unto me.

80 O let my heart be sound in thy statutes : that I be not ashamed.

CAPH.

MY soul hath longed for thy salvation : and I have a good hope because of thy word.

82 Mine eyes long sore for thy word : saying, O when wilt Thou comfort me ?

83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke : yet do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many are the days of thy servant : when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me ?

75. *I know, O Lord*] A short verse, which contains a whole treasury of comfort to the afflicted and bereaved. Refer to ver. 67.

— *Of very faithfulness*] Thou hast sent trouble and affliction, with the merciful intent of awakening and saving me. Isa. xxxix. 8.

78. *For they go wickedly, &c.*] “For they dealt perversely with me without a cause.”

79. *Be turned unto me*] Join themselves to me, and follow the same course that I have chosen. Refer to ver. 74.

82. *Long sore for thy word*] Fail with constant looking for the fulfilment of thy promise.

83. *A bottle in the smoke*] Bottles to hold water or wine were made of skins, and these leathern bottles, when hung up in the tents, were apt to become dry and shrivelled by the heat and smoke. Such is the figure by which the Psalmist represents his own fainting and exhausted spirit. Josh. ix. 4, 13.

84. *How many, &c.*] The Psalmist implores speedy help, in consideration of the shortness of life. What time have I to live, that Thou shouldst defer my deliverance so long ?

— *Be avenged*] Execute a just judgment upon. 2 Thess. i. 6.

85 The proud have digged pits for me : which are not after thy law.

86 All thy commandments are true : they persecute me falsely ; O be Thou my help.

87 They had almost made an end of me upon earth : but I forsook not thy commandments.

88 O quicken me after thy loving-kindness : and so shall I keep the testimonies of thy mouth.

LAMED.

O LORD, thy word : endureth for ever in heaven.
90 Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to another : Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth.

91 They continue this day according to thine ordinance : for all things serve Thee.

92 If my delight had not been in thy law : I should have perished in my trouble.

93 I will never forget thy commandments : for with them Thou hast quickened me.

94 I am thine, O save me : for I have sought thy commandments.

95 The ungodly laid wait for me to destroy me : but I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I see that all things come to an end : but thy commandment is exceeding broad.

85. *Which are not after*] Which are opposed to, and in defiance of, thy law.

86. *Falsely*] "Wrongfully."

89. *For ever in heaven*] Thy word is established as firmly and immovably as the firmament of heaven. Ps. lxxxix. 2 ; Jer. xxxi. 35—37 ; xxxiii. 19—21.

91. *They*] That is, The heavens and the earth.

— *For all things serve Thee*] Or, literally, as in Bible Version,

"For all are thy servants."

92. *I should have perished, &c.*] Had not my heart been fixed upon the comfortable promises of thy word, I should have sunk under the burden of my afflictions.

96. *I see that all things*] Or, I have seen a limit to all perfection. The works of man, however seemingly perfect, are confined within certain bounds of time and space ; but the word and law of God are infinite and eternal.

MEM.

LORD, what love have I unto thy law : all the day long is my study in it.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies : for they are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than my teachers : for thy testimonies are my study.

100 I am wiser than the aged : because I keep thy commandments.

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way : that I may keep thy word.

102 I have not shrunk from thy judgments : for Thou teachest me.

103 O how sweet are thy words unto my throat : yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth.

104 Through thy commandments I get understanding : therefore I hate all evil ways.

Morning.]

NUN.

[*Day 26.*

THY word is a lantern unto my feet : and a light unto my paths.

106 I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed : to keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am troubled above measure : quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word.

108 Let the free-will offerings of my mouth please Thee, O Lord : and teach me thy judgments.

109 My soul is alway in my hand : yet do I not forget thy law.

98. *They are ever with me*] Thy commandments are my ever-present instructors.

104. *All evil ways*] "Every false way." Compare ver. 29. The knowledge of God's law will teach men to abhor the false and corrupt ways of the world.

105. *Thy word is a lantern, &c.*] Compare *Prov. vi. 23.*

108. *The free-will offerings*] Be pleased to accept my willing prayers, praises, and thanksgivings : a petition which may be well used by any one before Divine Service.

109. *My soul is alway in my hand*] My life is in danger every moment. The expression occurs, *Judges xii. 8* ; *1 Sam. xix. 5* ; *Job xiii. 14.*

110 The ungodly have laid a snare for me : but yet I swerved not from thy commandments.

111 Thy testimonies have I claimed as mine heritage for ever : and why ? they are the very joy of my heart.

112 I have applied my heart to fulfil thy statutes alway : even unto the end.

SAMECH.

I HATE them that imagine evil things : but thy law do I love.

114 Thou art my defence and shield : and my trust is in thy word.

115 Away from me, ye wicked : I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 O stablish me according to thy word, that I may live : and let me not be disappointed of my hope.

117 Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe : yea, my delight shall be ever in thy statutes.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that depart from thy statutes : for they imagine but deceit.

119 Thou putttest away all the ungodly of the earth like dross : therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee : and I am afraid of thy judgments.

AIN.

I DEAL with the thing that is lawful and right : O give me not over unto mine oppressors.

113. *I hate them, &c.*] The meaning seems rather to be, I hate double-minded men ; or, I hate divided, unsettled counsels. 1 Kings xviii. 21 ; James i. 7.

118. *They imagine but deceit*] The sense probably is, Their cunning plots come to nought, or deceive only themselves.

119. *Therefore I love, &c.*] That is, I love thy word and law as just and impartial, because Thou dost put away the ungodly, even as the alloy is separated from the pure

metal, by the action of fire. Isa. i. 25 ; Ezek. xxii. 18—22.

120. *Thy judgments*] The judgments which I see falling upon the ungodly.

121. *I deal with the thing, &c.*] "I have done judgment and justice." Compare 2 Cor. i. 12. The Psalmist asserts the uprightness of his conduct for the purpose of shewing that there was nothing in him which should provoke the ill-will and persecution of enemies. See 1 John iii. 21.

122 Make Thou thy servant to delight in that which is good : that the proud do me no wrong.

123 Mine eyes are wasted away with looking for thy health : and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 O deal with thy servant according unto thy loving mercy : and teach me thy statutes.

125 I am thy servant ; O grant me understanding : that I may know thy testimonies.

126 It is time for Thee, Lord, to lay to thine hand : for they have destroyed thy law.

127 For I love thy commandments : above gold and precious stone.

128 Therefore hold I straight all thy commandments : and all false ways I utterly abhor.

PE.

THY testimonies are wonderful : therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 When thy word goeth forth : it giveth light and understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth, and drew in my breath : for my delight was in thy commandments.

132 O look Thou upon me, and be merciful unto me : as Thou usest to do unto those that love thy Name.

133 Order my steps in thy word : and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me.

122. *Make Thou thy servant, &c.*] "Be surety for thy servant for good." Shew thyself my defender and champion against my haughty enemies.

123. *For thy health, and for the word, &c.*] For the salvation which Thou hast promised in thy word of truth. Refer to ver. 82.

126. *To lay to thine hand*] To put thy hand to the work ; that is, to execute judgment, and to assert the authority of thy law.

128. *Hold I straight*] I deem all thy commandments to be right, "I esteem all thy precepts concern-

ing all things to be right."

130. *When thy word goeth forth, &c.*] The opening up and unfolding of the word of God, gives understanding to the humble and true of heart. 'To the poor the Gospel is preached.' Luke vii. 22.

131. *I opened my mouth, &c.*] To open the mouth and draw in the breath, is the act of an eager and attentive listener. Ps. xlii. 1.

133. *Order my steps, &c.*] That is, strengthen and support my footsteps by thy word, or according to thy promise, that I be not led into the paths of sin.

134 O deliver me from the wrongful dealings of men : and so shall I keep thy commandments.

135 Shew the light of thy countenance upon thy servant : and teach me thy statutes.

136 Mine eyes gush out with water : because men keep not thy law.

TZADDI.

RIGHTEOUS art Thou, O Lord : and true is thy judgment.

138 The testimonies that Thou hast commanded : are exceedingly righteous and true.

139 My zeal hath even consumed me : because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word is tried to the uttermost : and thy servant loveth it.

141 I am small, and of no reputation : yet do I not forget thy commandments.

142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness : and thy law is the truth.

143 Trouble and heaviness have taken hold upon me : yet is my delight in thy commandments.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting : O grant me understanding, and I shall live.

Evening.

KOPH.

[*Day 26.*]

I CALL with my whole heart : hear me, O Lord, I will keep thy statutes.

146 Yea, even unto Thee do I call : help me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 Early in the morning do I cry unto Thee : for in thy word is my trust.

139. *My zeal*] My jealousy for God's honour. Ps. lxi. 9; John ii. 17.

140. *Tried to the uttermost*] "Thy Word is very pure," like gold or silver refined in the fire.

144. *O grant me understanding*]

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That is, give me only a knowledge of thy Word. The prayer is really the same as the last clause of that which we call the Prayer of St. Chrysostom: 'Grant us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting.'

148 Mine eyes prevent the night-watches : that I might be occupied in thy words.

149 Hear my voice, O Lord, according unto thy loving-kindness : quicken me, according as Thou art wont.

150 They draw nigh that of malice persecute me : and are far from thy law.

151 Be Thou nigh at hand, O Lord : for all thy commandments are true.

152 As concerning thy testimonies, I have known long since : that Thou hast grounded them for ever.

RESH.

O CONSIDER mine adversity, and deliver me : for I do not forget thy law.

154 Avenge Thou my cause, and deliver me : quicken me, according to thy word.

155 Health is far from the ungodly : for they regard not thy statutes.

156 Great is thy mercy, O Lord : quicken me, as Thou art wont.

157 Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me : yet do I not swerve from thy testimonies.

158 It grieveth me when I see the transgressors : because they keep not thy law.

159 Consider, O Lord, how I love thy commandments : O quicken me, according to thy loving-kindness.

160 Thy word is true from everlasting : all the judgments of thy righteousness endure for evermore.

SCHIN.

P RINCES have persecuted me without a cause : but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

148. *Prevent the night-watches*] Mine eyes are open before the watches of the night are passed. Compare Ps. cxxx. 6.

149. *According as Thou art wont*] Or, according to thy righteousness.

150. *That of malice persecute me*] Or, "that follow after mischief."

152. *Long since*] "Of old."
— *Grounded*] Fixed and established.

155. *Health*] "Salvation."

156. *As Thou art wont*] As Thou hast been used to do; or, it may be, According to thy truth and righteousness. See verse 149.

162 I am as glad of thy word : as one that findeth great spoils.

163 As for lies, I hate and abhor them : but thy law do I love.

164 Seven times a day do I praise Thee : because of thy righteous judgments.

165 Great is the peace that they have who love thy law : and they are not offended at it.

166 Lord, I have looked for thy saving health : and done after thy commandments.

167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies : and loved them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy commandments and testimonies : for all my ways are before Thee.

TAU.

LET my complaint come before Thee, O Lord : give me understanding, according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before Thee : deliver me, according to thy word.

171 My lips shall speak of thy praise : when Thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 Yea, my tongue shall sing of thy word : for all thy commandments are righteous.

173 Let thine hand help me : for I have chosen thy commandments.

174 I have longed for thy saving health, O Lord : and in thy law is my delight.

162. *I am as glad of thy Word, &c.*] I rejoice as much in the treasure of thy Word, as the conqueror does in the rich spoils of his enemies.

164. *Seven times a day*] Very frequently, constantly. Seven is often used in Scripture indefinitely, to signify many times. Ps. xii. 7; lxxix. 18; Matt. xviii. 21.

165. *Are not offended at it*] "And nothing shall offend them." There shall be no stumbling-block, or oc-

casión of offence, which the love of God's law shall not enable them to overcome. 'God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.' 1 Cor. x. 13.

169. *My complaint*] Not the voice of murmuring, but the cry of distress or necessity. See Ps. ix. 12; note.

175 O let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee :
and thy judgments shall help me.

176 I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost : O
seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments.

Morning.

PSALM CXX.

[*Day 27.*

ISRAEL IN THE MIDST OF HIS ENEMIES.

WHEN I was in trouble I called upon the Lord :
and He heard me.

2 Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips : and
from a deceitful tongue.

3 What reward shall be given or done unto thee,
thou false tongue : even mighty and sharp arrows,
with hot burning coals.

4 Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with
Mesech : and to have my habitation among the tents of
Kedar.

5 My soul hath long dwelt among them : that are
enemies unto peace.

6 I labour for peace, but when I speak unto them
thereof : they make them ready to battle.

176. *O seek thy servant*] That is, bring home to the fold thy lost sheep. Jer. l. 6 ; John x. 14—16. This verse seems to have supplied the clause in our General Confession, 'We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.'

Ps. CXX. is the first of a series of fifteen short Psalms (cxx.—cxxxiv.), which are entitled in the Bible Version, "Psalms of Degrees," or of "Ascents." A probable opinion is, that they were sung by the bands of pilgrims who went up yearly to Jerusalem at the great festivals, and by the exiles on their return from captivity.

3. *What reward*] The Psalmist addresses his false accuser, and asks, What profit or advantage dost thou expect from thy slander and

falsehood? It will even be "sharp arrows of the mighty, and coals of fire;" that is, the severest chastisement of God. See Ps. xlv. 6.

4. *To dwell with Mesech*] The position both of Mesech and of Kedar is uncertain. They were, however, probably, very remote the one from the other; and therefore the Psalmist must mean to lament his being compelled to dwell in the midst of tribes as wild and fierce as the descendants of Mesech, the son of Japhet (Gen. x. 2); and Kedar the son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 13).

5. *My soul hath long dwelt, &c.*] The allusion is probably to the long years of captivity in an enemy's country.

6. *I labour for peace, &c.*] "I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war."

PSALM CXXI.

GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF HIS SERVANTS.

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills : from whence cometh my help.

2 My help cometh even from the Lord : who hath made heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved : and He that keepeth thee will not sleep.

4 Behold, He that keepeth Israel : shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The Lord Himself is thy keeper : the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand ;

6 So that the sun shall not burn thee by day : neither the moon by night.

7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil : yea, it is even He that shall keep thy soul.

8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in : from this time forth for evermore.

PSALM CXXII.

THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL ON THEIR WAY TO THE TEMPLE.

I WAS glad when they said unto me : ' We will go into the house of the Lord.'

Ps. CXXI. appears to have been adapted to the time when the returning exiles first caught sight of the towers and domes of Jerusalem. But like the rest of these inspired poems, it is suited for all times, and has been used in all ages of the Church, as the most beautiful expression of confidence in the protection of an over-ruling and ever-watchful Providence. Refer to Ezra viii. 22 ; Isa. ii. 3.

1. *The hills*] 'The holy hills of Zion, on which the city and the temple of Jerusalem were built. See Ps. lxxxvii. 1.

5. *Thy defence*] "Thy shade,"

against the fierce rays of an eastern sun ; thy shield and defence amid the dangers that encompass thee.

6. *Shall not burn*] "Shall not smite thee." Compare Gen. xxi. 40 : 'In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.' The coldness of the nights, which is especially observable in Eastern countries, is popularly attributed to the moon.

Ps. CXXII. is one which the Churchman of every generation may adopt as his prayer for the peace and prosperity of the 'Catholic Church.'

2 Our feet shall stand in thy gates : O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is built as a city : that is at unity in itself.

4 For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord : to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

5 For there is the seat of judgment : even the seat of the house of David.

6 O pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls : and plenteousness within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes : I will wish thee prosperity.

9 Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God : I will seek to do thee good.

PSALM CXXIII.

HUMBLE LOOKING UP TO GOD.

UNTO Thee lift I up mine eyes : O Thou that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress : even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us.

3. *A city that is at unity in itself*] A city compact, and well proportioned, so that the buildings appeared to form one harmonious whole; an emblem of the union and brotherhood of God's own people. Consider Ephes. ii. 20—22; Rev. xxi. 16.

4. *To testify unto Israel, &c.*] The going up of the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem, three times every year, was according to the testimony or ordinance given in the Law of Moses. Exod. xxiii. 14—17. See also Ps. lxxxi. 3—5.

5. *The seat of judgment*] The

throne of the king, the seat of the Sanhedrim, or great council of the nation, and of the courts of justice.

In Ps. CXXIII. the people are represented humbly looking up to their heavenly King for support and deliverance, as household servants look to their earthly masters and mistresses for food and protection. It is suitable to the circumstances of the restored tribes, who were exposed to the attacks of the Samaritans, and other adversaries. See Nehem. iv. 7—15.

2. *Until He have mercy*] We do

3 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us : for we are utterly despised.

4 Our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy : and with the despitefulness of the proud.

PSALM CXXIV.

GOD THE DEFENCE OF HIS PEOPLE.

IF the Lord Himself had not been on our side,' now may Israel say : 'if the Lord Himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us ;

2 They had swallowed us up quick ; when they were so wrathfully displeased at us.

3 Yea, the waters had drowned us : and the stream had gone over our soul.

4 The deep waters of the proud : had gone even over our soul.

5 But praised be the Lord : who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.

6 Our soul is escaped even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler : the snare is broken, and we are delivered.

7 Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord : who hath made heaven and earth.'

PSALM CXXV.

TRUST IN GOD OUR BEST SECURITY.

THEY that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the mount Sion : which may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever.

not limit our hope to a definite time, but are content to wait patiently till we are counted meet to receive pardon and mercy.

4. *The scornful reproof of the wealthy*] "The scorning of those who are at ease." This, and the preceding verse, may perhaps refer to the contempt with which the Israelites were treated by their proud masters in Babylon.

Ps. CXXIV.—The Psalmist celebrates some signal deliverance of

his nation, and ascribes it to God alone ; thus inculcating the same lesson as is taught in so many Psalms, that in God alone can we trust for protection and safety in danger.

2. *Quick*] Alive. Numb. xvi. 30.

4. *The deep waters of the proud, &c.*] The swelling tide of insolence and contempt would have overwhelmed us.

6. *The snare of the fowler*] Compare Ps. xci. 3.

Ps. CXXV.—In the midst, as it

2 The hills stand about Jerusalem : even so standeth the Lord round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

3 For the rod of the ungodly cometh not into the lot of the righteous : lest the righteous put their hand unto wickedness.

4 Do well, O Lord : unto those that are good and true of heart.

5 As for such as turn back unto their own wickedness : the Lord shall lead them forth with the evil-doers ; but peace shall be upon Israel.

Evening.]

PSALM CXXVI.

[Day 27.]

SONG OF THE CAPTIVES RETURNED FROM BABYLON.

WHEN the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion : then were we like unto them that dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter : and our tongue with joy.

would seem, of trouble and persecution, the Church and people of God are sustained by the assurance of his favour and protection, under which they might rest immovable as Mount Zion, and secure as the Holy City, surrounded by its mountain bulwarks.

3. *The rod of the ungodly*] The governing rod, or sceptre, which, in the hands of ungodly rulers, becomes the instrument of tyranny and oppression : thus the Assyrian is called the rod of God's anger. Isa. x. 5.

— *Cometh not into*] Or, as the Bible hath it, "shall not rest" (or always remain) "upon;" *the lot of the righteous*; that is, upon or over their inheritance and possessions. The meaning seems to be this : God does not suffer the ungodly to exercise any lasting dominion over the righteous, lest the righteous, seeing their unbelieving enemies in power, and themselves oppressed,

should be led to distrust God, and seek unlawful means to redress their own wrongs.

5. *Such as turn back*] "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways." Ezek. xviii. 24, 26.

— *Shall lead them forth*] Shall conduct them as criminals to execution beyond the gates of the city. Num. xv. 35, 36; Acts vii. 58; Heb. xiii. 12, 13.

Ps. CXXVI. belongs to the time of Ezra, about 536 B.C. The exiles, restored to their own country after their long captivity in Babylon, break out into expressions of joy and thanksgiving; and pray the Lord, who brought about their deliverance, to complete his work by bringing back also their brethren who remained behind.

1. *Them that dream*] Our deliverance was too surprising, and our joy too great, for a waking reality.

3 Then said they among the heathen : 'The Lord hath done great things for them.'

4 Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already : whereof we rejoice.

5 Turn our captivity, O Lord : as the rivers in the south.

6 They that sow in tears : shall reap in joy.

7 He that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed : shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.

PSALM CXXVII.

NO GOOD THING WITHOUT GOD'S BLESSING.

EXCEPT the Lord build the house : their labour is but lost that build it.

2 Except the Lord keep the city : the watchman waketh but in vain.

3 It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early, and so late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness : for so He giveth his beloved, sleep.

5. *Turn our captivity*] Either bring back our remaining captives, or return to, be favourable to, our captive people.

— *The rivers in the south*] As the dried-up channels of the rivers in the south flow again in full streams after the rains have fallen.

7. *He that now goeth*] The Hebrew is very expressive : 'Going, he shall go and weep, bearing a load of seed ; coming, he shall come with singing, bearing his sheaves.' The weariness of the long march from Babylon to Jerusalem ; the many years of toil required to restore their country to fertility, and to rebuild their city and temple,—if this was such a prospect as to make them weep,—the promise of a happy issue to their labours would sustain their spirits in the anticipation of the time when their sorrow should be turned into joy. 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

Ps. CXXVII. is ascribed to Solomon, and may, perhaps, have been composed at the time of the building of the Temple ; but it might, with equal suitableness, have been used on the occasion of the return from captivity, and the rebuilding of God's House. The Psalm piously ascribes all blessings, success, safety, and domestic happiness, to God alone ; and is, therefore, adopted in the Office of "Thanksgiving for Women after Child-birth."

3. *For so He giveth his beloved, sleep*] While the men of this world, trusting to themselves alone, toil early and late, to heap up riches and make a fortune, God supplies the wants of his beloved servants, as it were, in their 'sleep,' that is, without any such excessive labour and anxiety on their part. Matt. vi. 33. Compare Prov. x. 22. In connexion with this subject, the

4 Lo, children and the fruit of the womb : are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord.

5 Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant : even so are the young children.

6 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them : they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

PSALM CXXVIII.

THE BLESSINGS OF THE GODLY.

BLESSED are all they that fear the Lord : and walk in his ways.

2 For thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands : O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.

3 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine : upon the walls of thine house.

4 Thy children like the olive-branches : round about thy table.

reader should be reminded that the name of Jedidiah, 'Beloved of the Lord,' was given to Solomon by command of Jehovah (2 Sam. xii. 25); and the inestimable blessing of a wise and understanding heart, as well as riches and honour, was vouchsafed to him *in sleep*. (1 Kings iii. 9—14.)

4. *Lo, children, &c.*] This is another instance of a blessing entirely dependent upon God's good will. Gen. xxxiii. 5; Josh. xxiv. 3, 4.

5. *The young children*] Rather, "children of the youth;" that is, of young parents; sons who come to their strength while the father is yet in the vigour of life. Such children are to their father for protection and defence, like weapons in the hand of the warrior.

6. *They shall not be ashamed*] Shall not be put to shame, when *the contest* is either with arms *against an invading foe*, or in the

court of justice, at the gate of the city. Gen. xxiv. 60; Josh. xx. 4.

Ps. CXXVIII. contains four especial forms of blessing to God's true and faithful servants:—1. The peaceful enjoyment of the fruits of their labour; 2. A numerous and affectionate family; 3. The prosperity of their country and Church; 4. The privilege of seeing their children of the second generation grow up. The Psalm is one of those appointed to be used in the 'Solemnization of Matrimony.'

3. *Upon the walls of thine house*] Or, thy wife in the inner chambers of thy house shall be like a fruitful vine. The wife, who is the constant companion of her husband, and occupies herself at home with her family, is contrasted with the strange woman described in Prov. vii. 11, 12.

4. *Olive-branches*] "Olive-plants.

5 Lo, thus shall the man be blessed : that feareth the Lord.

6 The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless thee : that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.

7 Yea, that thou shalt see thy children's children : and peace upon Israel.

PSALM CXXIX.

PAST TRIALS AND PAST DELIVERANCES.

' **M**ANY a time have they fought against me from my youth up' : may Israel now say.

2 'Yea, many a time have they vexed me from my youth up : but they have not prevailed against me.'

3 The plowers plowed upon my back : and made long furrows.

4 But the righteous Lord : hath hewn the snares of the ungodly in pieces.

5 Let them be confounded and turned backward : as many as have evil will at Sion.

6 Let them be even as the grass growing upon the house-tops : which withereth afore it be plucked up ;

7 Whereof the mower filleth not his hand : neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom.

6. *See Jerusalem in prosperity*] Nothing can more clearly show the strong affection which the Israelite bore to his Church and country, than that the peculiar blessing promised to him was, that he should see Jerusalem in prosperity all his life long. Compare Is. xxxiii. 20.

7. *And peace upon Israel*] Instead of joining these words to the preceding clause, it is better to take them as a concluding benediction : — 'May peace be upon Israel !'

In Ps. CXXIX., which belongs to the period after the return from Babylon, Israel is personified and made to speak of the troubles of her

youth, in Egypt and the wilderness, and of the manner in which she had been brought through them. This Psalm is applicable to the spiritual Israel ; it foreshows the troubles and deliverances of the Church, and the final overthrow of her enemies.

3. *Plowed upon my back*] Inflicted upon me stripes that are like furrows made by the plough. Compare Isa. li, 23.

4. *Hath hewn the snares*] "Hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked."

6. *Grass growing upon the house-tops*] Grass often grows up after rain on the flat roofs of houses in the East, but, having no depth of soil, it almost immediately withers.

lids to slumber : neither the temples of my head to take any rest ;

5 Until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord : an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.'

6 Lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata : and found it in the wood.

7 We will go into his tabernacle : and fall low on our knees before his footstool.

8 Arise, O Lord, into thy resting-place : Thou, and the ark of thy strength.

9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness : and let thy saints sing with joyfulness.

10 For thy servant David's sake : turn not away the presence of thine anointed.

11 The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David : and He shall not shrink from it ;

12 'Of the fruit of thy body : shall I set upon thy seat.

13 If thy children will keep my covenant, and my testimonies that I shall learn them : their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore.'

14 For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for Himself : He hath longed for her.

6. *Of the same*] We heard of the lost ark at *Ephrata* ; that is, Bethlehem, the place where the report reached us ; *and found it in the wood*. In the forest-field, near Kirjath-jearim, or 'the town of the forest,' where the ark was discovered. 1 Chron. xiii. 5, 6.

8. *Arise, O Lord*] These words were used by the Israelites in their marches through the wilderness when the ark was carried forward, and were adopted by Solomon at the dedication of the temple. 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42. Ps. lxxviii. 1.

9. *Let thy priests, &c.*] This verse furnishes two petitions in the short *Litany* before the Collect, at Morn-

ing and Evening Prayer : 'Endue thy ministers with righteousness. And make thy chosen people joyful.'

10. *Turn not away the presence*] "Turn not away the face," that is, reject not the prayer of me, thine anointed servant. The words may be found in Solomon's Prayer of Dedication already referred to. 2 Chron. vi. 42.

11. *A faithful oath*] This solemn promise is shown by St. Peter (Acts ii. 30) to have reference to the resurrection and eternal kingship of the Messiah. From this solemn oath the Lord will never *shrink*, or depart. Num. xxiii. 19.

15 'This shall be my rest for ever : here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.

16 I will bless her victuals with increase : and will satisfy her poor with bread.

17 I will deck her priests with health : and her saints shall rejoice and sing.

18 There shall I make the horn of David to flourish : I have ordained a lantern for mine anointed.

19 As for his enemies, I shall clothe them with shame : but upon himself shall his crown flourish.'

PSALM CXXXIII.

BROTHERLY LOVE AND HARMONY.

BEHOLD, how good and joyful a thing it is : brethren, to dwell together in unity !

2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard : even unto Aaron's beard, and went down to the skirts of his clothing.

15—18] These are the promises of Jehovah to the family of David, and, doubtless, through them, to the Church of Christ, on condition of their continuing to observe his laws and keep his covenant.

16. *Her victuals*] "Her provision." See Zech. viii. 12.

17. *With health*] Saving health, "salvation." 2 Chron. vi. 41.

18. *The horn of David to flourish*] "There will I make the horn (the power and glory) of David to bud." Ezek. xxix. 21.

— *A lantern*] A light, the emblem of glory and prosperity. It was ordained that a lamp should burn continually in the tabernacle. Exod. xxvii. 20. See also Ps. xviii. 28.

Ps. CXXXIII., a Psalm of David, is a beautiful picture of the blessedness of brotherly concord and harmony. It may probably have been suggested by a view of all the twelve

tribes assembled to worship at Jerusalem on one of the great festivals. In tone it bears a striking resemblance to Ps. CXXII.; and both seem designed to kindle the affections of the people to their common home and centre,—the city where the ark rested, and where hereafter the temple was to be built.

1. *Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, &c.*] Rather, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren (worshippers of the same God) to dwell together in unity !" The title of this Psalm, in the Bible Version, is, "The benefit of the Communion of Saints."

2. *The skirts of his clothing*] The hem of his garment; probably the fringe of the collar of the ephod. Allusion is made to the anointing of the high-priest, and the name of Aaron is introduced because he was first anointed to that sacred office. Exod. xxviii. 31, 32.

3 Like as the dew of Hermon : which fell upon the hill of Sion.

4 For there the Lord promised his blessing : and life for evermore.

PSALM CXXXIV.

THE OFFICE OF GOD'S MINISTERS.

BEHOLD now, praise the Lord : all ye servants of the Lord ;

2 Ye that by night stand in the house of the Lord : even in the courts of the house of our God.

3 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary : and praise the Lord.'

4 'The Lord that made heaven and earth : give thee blessing out of Sion.'

PSALM CXXXV.

THANKSGIVING FOR NATIONAL MERCIES.

O PRAISE the Lord, laud ye the Name of the Lord : praise it, O ye servants of the Lord ;

3. *The dew of Hermon, &c.*] The Bible Version is, "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion." Some understand *the dew of Hermon* to signify simply very rich and abundant dew, and then the meaning will be, The beauty of brotherly love and concord is like the bright and refreshing dew that falls on Mount Zion.

4. *For there*] That is, on Mount Zion.

— *And life for evermore*] "Even life for evermore." Long life was the promised blessing of the Law ; and He in whom the Law was to be fulfilled was the Giver of eternal life, through the Gospel, to all who should believe in Him. Deut. iv. 40 ; John x. 28 ; xi. 25, 26.

Ps. CXXXIV.—The first three verses were probably addressed by a company of devout worshippers to the priests and Levites who were keeping their holy watch in the Temple. The people are answered by a solemn benediction ; and thus the series of pilgrim songs is beautifully closed, and the faithful Israelites dismissed with a blessing to their homes.

Ps. CXXXV. recites, as motives to the praise of Jehovah, his wonderful works in nature, his interposition in behalf of his own people, and the vanity and nothingness of the gods of the heathen.

1. *Laud*] Laud is a word derived from the Latin, meaning the same as, Praise.

2 Ye that stand in the house of the Lord : in the courts of the house of our God.

3 O praise the Lord, for the Lord is gracious : O sing praises unto his Name, for it is lovely.

4 For why ? the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself : and Israel for his own possession.

5 For I know that the Lord is great : and that our Lord is above all gods.

6 Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth : and in the sea, and in all deep places.

7 He bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world : and sendeth forth lightnings with the rain, bringing the winds out of his treasures.

8 He smote the first-born of Egypt : both of man and beast.

9 He hath sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O thou land of Egypt : upon Pharaoh, and all his servants.

10 He smote divers nations : and slew mighty kings ;

11 Sehon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Basan : and all the kingdoms of Canaan ;

12 And gave their land to be an heritage : even an heritage unto Israel his people.

13 Thy Name, O Lord, endureth for ever : so doth thy memorial, O Lord, from one generation to another.

2. *Ye that stand, &c.*] The priests and ministers of Jehovah,—those who wait upon Him in his sanctuary,—are specially invited to praise Him. Neh. ix. 4, 5.

4. *His own possession*] “His peculiar treasure.” Deut. vii. 6.

6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He, &c.*] While the so-called gods of the heathen are nothing but helpless and lifeless idols, Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the Creator of the Universe, who framed and governs all things according to his will. See Ps. cxv. 3.

7. *He bringeth forth the clouds,*
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&c.] “He causeth the vapours (which form the clouds) to ascend from the ends of the earth.”

7. *Out of his treasures*] Rather, Out of his treasure-houses. This verse occurs in Jer. x. 13.

8. *The first-born of Egypt*] Refer to Exod. xii. 12—29.

9. *All his servants*] The ministers and courtiers of a sovereign are called his servants. Exod. v. 21; vii. 10.

11. *Sehon*] For the history, see Numb. xxi. 21—35.

12. *Heritage*] A possession to which the Israelites succeeded.

14 For the Lord will avenge his people : and be gracious unto his servants.

15 As for the images of the heathen, they are but silver and gold : the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, and speak not : eyes have they; but they see not.

17 They have ears, and yet they hear not : neither is there any breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them : and so are all they that put their trust in them.

19 Praise the Lord, ye house of Israel : praise the Lord, ye house of Aaron.

20 Praise the Lord, ye house of Levi : ye that fear the Lord, praise the Lord.

21 Praised be the Lord out of Sion : who dwelleth at Jerusalem.

Evening.

PSALM CXXXVI.

[*Day 28.*

GOD'S EVER-ENDURING MERCY.

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious : and his mercy endureth for ever.

2 O give thanks unto the God of all gods : for his mercy endureth for ever.

3 O thank the Lord of all lords : for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 Who only doeth great wonders : for his mercy endureth for ever.

14. *Will avenge his people*] Will see them righted.

— *Be gracious unto his servants*] “Will repent Himself concerning his servants,” that is, will ‘let go his wrath’ and have compassion on them. See Ps. xc. 13. Compare Deut. xxxii. 36.

15—18.] The helplessness of the dumb, deaf, and blind gods of the heathen, is contrasted with the Almighty and wonder-working God of Israel. Compare Ps. cxv. 4—8.

19, 20. *Ye house of Israel, &c.*]

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Compare Ps. cxv. 9—11.

21. *Dwelleth at Jerusalem*] “At Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling in Sion.” Ps. lxxvi. 2.

Ps. CXXXVI., continuing the same strain as the preceding one, seems intended to rekindle and sustain the faith of the Israelites in their God, by calling to their mind the glorious manifestations of his power in the times of their fathers.

4. *Who only doeth*] “Who alone doeth,” &c.

5 Who by his excellent wisdom made the heavens for his mercy endureth for ever.

6 Who laid out the earth above the waters : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

7 Who hath made great lights : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

8 The sun to rule the day : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

9 The moon and the stars to govern the night : for his mercy endureth for ever.

10 Who smote Egypt with their first-born : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

11 And brought out Israel from among them : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

12 With a mighty hand and stretched out arm : for his mercy endureth for ever.

13 Who divided the Red sea in two parts : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

14 And made Israel to go through the midst of it : for his mercy endureth for ever.

15 But as for Pharaoh and his host, He overthrew them in the Red sea : for his mercy endureth for ever.

16 Who led his people through the wilderness : for his mercy endureth for ever.

17 Who smote great kings : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

18 Yea, and slew mighty kings : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

19 Sehon king of the Amorites : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

8. *To rule the day*] "To rule by day." Compare Gen. i. 16.

9. *Govern the night*] "Rule by night." Compare Jer. xxxi. 35.

10. *With their first-born*] Rather "In their first-born." It will be remembered that in this and some succeeding verses, as 15, 17—22,

an inspired poet of the Hebrews is celebrating the praises of Jehovah for the merciful deliverance of his countrymen, which could only be effected through the chastisement and overthrow of their enemies.

10—15. Read Exod. xii.—xiv.

17—22. Refer back to the

20 And Og the king of Basan : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

21 And gave away their land for an heritage : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

22 Even for an heritage unto Israel his servant : for his mercy endureth for ever.

23 Who remembered us when we were in trouble : for his mercy endureth for ever ;

24 And hath delivered us from our enemies : for his mercy endureth for ever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh : for his mercy endureth for ever.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven : for his mercy endureth for ever.

27 O give thanks unto the Lord of lords : for his mercy endureth for ever.

PSALM CXXXVII.

THE JEW'S REMEMBRANCE OF HIS CAPTIVITY.

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept : when we remembered thee, O Sion.

2 As for our harps, we hanged them up : upon the trees that are therein.

3 For they that led us away captive required of us then a song, and melody, in our heaviness : 'Sing us one of the songs of Sion.'

4 How shall we sing the Lord's song : in a strange land ?

preceding Psalm, verses 10—12, and the notes thereon.

23. *When we were in trouble*] "In our low estate."

Ps. CXXXVII. depicts the sad condition of the people during their banishment, with a view to excite their love and devotion to their own country and Church.

1. *The waters of Babylon*] The

Euphrates, Tigris, and other rivers of Chaldæa.

2. *As for our harps, &c.*] Poetry has never furnished a more striking picture of national mourning than is here set before us;—a people weeping by the streams of a foreign land, and the harp of their own country suspended on the willows overhead. Comp. Ezek. xxvi. 13.

— *The trees*] "The willows in the midst thereof."

5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem : let my right hand forget her cunning.

6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth : yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem in my mirth.

7 Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem : how they said, 'Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.'

8 O daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery : yea, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us.

9 Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children : and throweth them against the stones.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

GOD'S LOVING-KINDNESS AND TRUTH.

I WILL give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart : even before the gods will I sing praise unto Thee.

5. *Her cunning*] Her especial art. Probably her skill in playing upon the harp. 1 Sam. xvi. 16; Isa. iii. 3. In modern use, the word *cunning* signifies commonly that skill, or craft, which is employed to deceive.

6. *If I prefer not, &c.*] "If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

7. *The day of Jerusalem*] The day of her disgrace and downfall. For reference to the insulting joy of Esau over his brother Jacob in the day of his calamity, see Obad. 10—14; Ezek. xxv. 12—14.

8. *Wasted with misery*] "Who art to be destroyed," who art doomed to destruction.

9. *Blessed shall he be*] God shall, in his just judgment, bless with success the invading enemy of Babylon, namely Cyrus, whom

He had raised up to execute vengeance on the cruel oppressors of his people Israel. The terrible vengeance which would overtake them, and which would spare neither women nor children, is foretold by Isaiah, ch. xiii. 16. Compare Hos. x. 14.

Pa. CXXXVIII. gratefully acknowledges past mercies, and looks forward to the universal establishment and recognition of the power and authority of Jehovah.

1. *Before the gods*] Some suppose that by gods the kings and judges of the earth are signified (Ps. lxxxii. 1); others, the gods of the heathen: but the old Greek and Latin Versions translate the word 'Angels.' In this sense, the words of the Psalmist bear a close resemblance to our own ascription

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy Name, because of thy loving-kindness and truth : for Thou hast magnified thy Name, and thy Word, above all things.

3 When I called upon Thee, Thou heardest me : and enduedst my soul with much strength.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise Thee, O Lord : for they have heard the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord : that great is the glory of the Lord.

6 For though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly : as for the proud, He beholdeth them afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, yet shalt Thou refresh me : Thou shalt stretch forth thy hand upon the furiousness of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The Lord shall make good his loving-kindness towards me : yea, thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever ; despise not then the works of thine own hands.

Morning.]

PSALM CXXXIX.

[Day 29.]

THE OMNIPRESENCE AND OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

O LORD, Thou hast searched me out, and known me : Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising ; Thou understandest my thoughts long before.

of praise in the Communion Service, 'Therefore, with angels and archangels,' &c.

2. *Toward thy holy temple*] Compare Ps. v. 7 ; Dan. vi. 10.

— *Magnified . . . thy Word*] Hast, in a wonderful manner, fulfilled thy promise.

4. *All the kings of the earth*] These words surely have reference to the times of the Messiah, and the conversion of heathen kings through his Gospel. See Ps. xxii. 27 ; cii. 15 ; Isa. xlix. 23.

— *For they have heard*] Or, as

in the Bible Version, "when they hear."

5. *In the ways*] Or, concerning the ways of God, their excellence and justice.

6. *For though the Lord be high*] Compare Isa. lvii. 15 ; lxvi. 2.

— *beholdeth them afar off*] Regards them with aversion and displeasure. He will not suffer the proud to approach Him.

8. *Despise not*] Do not overlook or abandon.

Ps. CXXXIX. is a solemn ap-

2 Thou art about my path, and about my bed : and spiest out all my ways.

3 For lo, there is not a word in my tongue : but Thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.

4 Thou hast fashioned me, behind and, before : and laid thine hand upon me.

5 Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me : I cannot attain unto it.

6 Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit : or whither shall I go then from thy presence ?

7 If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there : if I go down to hell, Thou art there also.

8 If I take the wings of the morning : and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea ;

9 Even there also shall thy hand lead me : and thy right hand shall hold me.

10 If I say, 'Peradventure the darkness shall cover me' : then shall my night be turned to day.

11 Yea, the darkness is no darkness with Thee, but the night is as clear as the day : the darkness and light to Thee are both alike.

peal, unequalled for the beauty of its diction and imagery, to the Searcher of hearts, and may be most profitably used as a help to self-examination.

1. *Thou hast searched me out*] The sense of God's being everywhere present, and knowing our most secret thoughts and actions, may well lead us to use that most beautiful prayer in the Communion Service, 'Almighty God, to whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid,' &c. Compare Heb. iv. 13.

3. *Not a word in my tongue, &c.*] Thou knowest my words before I give them utterance ; Thou perceivest all my thoughts before my voice can express them.

4. *Hast fashioned*] "Hast beset

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me," hast compassed me. The meaning seems to be, Thou art before, behind, on every side of me, to direct and control my movements and actions. Compare Job xxiii. 8—10.

5. *Cannot attain*] Cannot rise high enough to reach it.

7. *To hell*] Under the earth. The region of darkness and death. Compare Amos ix. 2, and Prov. xv. 11.

8. *The wings of the morning*] If, with the rapidity of the sunbeam, I dart from east to farthest west.

10. *Peradventure*] Perhaps. — *Shall cover me*] That is, Shall hide me from thy sight.

— *Then shall my night*] The darkness in which I attempt to shroud myself shall be mid-daylight unto Thee.

12 For my reins are thine : Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

13 I will give thanks unto Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.

14 My bones are not hid from Thee : though I be made secretly, and fashioned beneath in the earth.

15 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect : and in thy book were all my members written ;

16 Which day by day were fashioned : when as yet there was none of them.

17 How dear are thy counsels unto me, O God : O how great is the sum of them !

18 If I tell them, they are more in number than the sand : when I wake up I am present with Thee.

19 Wilt Thou not slay the wicked, O God : depart from me, ye blood-thirsty men.

20 For they speak unrighteously against Thee : and thine enemies take thy Name in vain.

21 Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee : and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee ?

22 Yea, I hate them right sore : even as though they were mine enemies.

23 Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart : prove me, and examine my thoughts.

12. *My reins are thine*] Thou hast formed those inner organs of the body which are the seat of man's feelings and affections ; how, then, can anything about him be hidden from thy sight ? Isa. xliv. 2.

14. *My bones, &c.*] The framework of my body was not hid from Thee while I was being fashioned in secret. Before I was born, and while hidden as if underground, Thou sawest me, and didst watch my growth. Compare Job x. 8—11.

15. *My substance*] The matter out of which I was formed.

18. *If I tell them*] "If I should

count them."

18. *When I wake up*] Night and morning, waking and sleeping, my mind is absorbed in the contemplation of God's infinite knowledge and wisdom.

19. *Wilt Thou not slay, &c.*] Wilt not Thou, O God, who seest and knowest the hidden thoughts and counsels of all men, destroy the wicked, even thine enemies, and avenge the cause of thy true servants ? Compare Isa. xi. 4.

23, 24. *Try me, O God, &c.*] The Psalmist, having already so fully expressed his belief that from God

24 Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me : and lead me in the way everlasting.

PSALM CXL.

FOR DELIVERANCE FROM SLANDER AND VIOLENCE.

DELIVER me, O Lord, from the evil man ; and preserve me from the wicked man,

2 Who imagine mischief in their hearts : and stir up strife all the day long.

3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent : adder's poison is under their lips.

4 Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the ungodly : preserve me from the wicked men, who are purposed to overthrow my goings.

5 The proud have laid a snare for me, and spread a net abroad with cords : yea, and set traps in my way.

6 I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God : hear the voice of my prayers, O Lord.

7 O Lord God, Thou strength of my health : Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

8 Let not the ungodly have his desire, O Lord : let not his mischievous imagination prosper, lest they be too proud.

9 Let the mischief of their own lips fall upon the head of them : that compass me about.

10 Let hot burning coals fall upon them : let them be cast into the fire, and into the pit, that they never rise up again.

no secrets are hid, here prays that he may himself be made conscious of his own transgressions, and so by repentance be led into the way of life eternal. 1 Pet. i. 7 ; Heb. xii. 15, 16.

Ps. CXL. is ascribed to David, and may refer to the time when he was persecuted by Saul and Doeg. In a spiritual sense the Psalm is applicable to Christ and the ene-

mies and persecutors of his Church.

3. *Adder's poison*] The same imagery occurs in Ps. lvi. 4.

5. *Spread a net abroad*] "Have spread a net by the way-side."

7. *Hast covered my head*] Hast been my shield and protection. See 1 Sam. xvii. 45—51 ; 2 Sam. viii. 6.

8. *His mischievous imagination*] His wicked schemes and devices. See 2 Sam. xv. 31.

10. *Let hot burning coals, &c.*]

11 A man full of words shall not prosper upon the earth : evil shall hunt the wicked person to overthrow him.

12 Sure I am that the Lord will avenge the poor : and maintain the cause of the helpless.

13 The righteous also shall give thanks unto thy Name : and the just shall continue in thy sight.

PSALM CXLI.

FOR GRACE TO RESIST TEMPTATION.

LORD, I call upon Thee, haste Thee unto me : and consider my voice when I cry unto Thee.

2 Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense : and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice.

3 Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth : and keep the door of my lips.

4 O let not mine heart be inclined to any evil thing : let me not be occupied in ungodly works with the men that work wickedness, lest I eat of such things as please them.

'Upon the ungodly He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone,' &c. See Gen. xix. 24, and Ps. xi. 7.

11. *A man full of words*] "An evil speaker."

12. *Sure I am*] Notwithstanding my present distressed condition, I have a sure confidence in the justice of God.

13. *And the just, &c.*] "The upright shall dwell in thy presence."

Ps. CXLI. is ascribed in the Bible Version to David, and appears to have been written by him in some time of trial and persecution, perhaps when he was a fugitive through fear of Saul. See 1 Sam. xxvi.

2. *As the incense*] The Psalmist, far away from the Holy Tabernacle,

implores God favourably to regard his prayer as the pure incense there daily offered both morning and evening, and to take the uplifting of his hands in supplication instead of sacrifice. See Exod. xxx. 7, 8.

3. *Set a watch, O Lord, &c.*] David, surrounded by jealous countrymen and heathen enemies, prays that he may not be provoked, by impatience and resentment, into sin of thought, word, or deed. James i. 26.

4. *Lest I eat of such things as please them*] "Let me not eat of their dainties." The prayer of the Psalmist is against being tempted to share in the feasts, and so to fall in with the corrupt practices, of the wicked. Ps. cvi. 28 ; Prov. xxiii. 6.

5 Let the righteous rather smite me friendly : and reprove me.

6 But let not their precious balms break my head : yea, I will pray yet against their wickedness.

7 Let their judges be overthrown in stony places : that they may hear my words, for they are sweet.

8 Our bones lie scattered before the pit : like as when one breaketh and heweth wood upon the earth.

9 But mine eyes look unto Thee, O Lord God : in Thee is my trust, O cast not out my soul.

10 Keep me from the snare that they have laid for me : and from the traps of the wicked doers.

11 Let the ungodly fall into their own nets together : and let me ever escape them.

Evening.]

PSALM CXLII.

Day 29.

THE CRY OF THE FRIENDLESS.

I CRIED unto the Lord with my voice : yea, even unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

5. *Smite me friendly*] Or, Smite me with love. The rendering of the Bible Version is more clear : "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness ; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." Gal. vi. 1.

6. *Precious balms*] The oil with which the head of an honoured guest at a feast was anointed.

— *Against their wickedness*] Against the wicked devices of my enemies ; or, as in Bible Version, "in their calamities."

7. *Let their judges, &c.*] Let the unjust judges (or rulers) be cast down the rocky steeps for their destruction ; that the people, warned by their fate, may listen to the words of truth and peace. A learned scholar translates the words as follows :—

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Against the rocks their judges are dashed : So shall they hear my words, how lovely they are.—Read 1 Chron. x.

8. *Our bones*] The bones of our slain are scattered on the sides of the grave, as thoughtlessly and unfeelingly as fagots of wood cleaved by the axe of the woodman.

9. *Cast not out my soul*] Or, Pour not out my life. Compare Isa. liii. 12. 'He hath poured out his soul unto death.' The expression is transferred from pouring out the blood, in which life is.

Ps. CXLII. is entitled in the Bible Version, "A Prayer of David when he was in the cave." The reader, therefore, should refer to 1 Sam. xxxii. 1, 2 ; xxiv. 1—3. It was obviously written by him in a

2 I poured out my complaints before Him : and shewed Him of my trouble.

3 When my spirit was in heaviness Thou knewest my path : in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 I looked also upon my right hand : and saw there was no man that would know me.

5 I had no place to flee unto : and no man cared for my soul.

6 I cried unto Thee, O Lord, and said : 'Thou art my hope, and my portion in the land of the living.

7 Consider my complaint : for I am brought very low.

8 O deliver me from my persecutors : for they are too strong for me.

9 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto thy Name : which thing if Thou wilt grant me, then shall the righteous resort unto my company.'

PSALM CXLIII.

PRAYER OF FAITH IN THE MIDST OF TROUBLES.

Proper Psalm for Ash Wednesday.

HEAR my prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire : hearken unto me for thy truth and righteousness' sake.

time of great straitness, and while surrounded by enemies.

3. *Thou knewest my path*] Thou knewest the dangers and difficulties which encompassed me.

4. *Upon my right hand*] It was the custom in the East for the champion and advocate to stand on the right hand of the person accused.

5. *No man cared for my soul*] No one was ready to protect my life.

9. *Bring my soul out of prison*] Deliver me from the bondage of fear and distress.

— *Then shall the righteous, &c.*
Or, *The righteous are watching me*

and expecting to see the power and mercy of God exerted for my deliverance. Ps. cxix. 79.

Ps. CXLIII.—In this Psalm, as in the last, David, sorely beset by his relentless enemies, yet supported by the remembrance of past mercies, appeals to God for help. The hundred and forty-third is the seventh and last of the 'Penitential Psalms.'

1. *My desire*] *Desire* has here, as commonly in Scripture, the sense of supplication or prayer. It is used in the same sense in the Col-

2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant : for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul ; he hath smitten my life down to the ground : he hath laid me in the darkness, as the men that have been long dead.

4 Therefore is my spirit vexed within me : and my heart within me is desolate.

5 Yet do I remember the time past ; I muse upon all thy works : yea, I exercise myself in the works of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto Thee : my soul gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land.

7 Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint : hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 O let me hear thy loving-kindness betimes in the morning, for in Thee is my trust : shew Thou me the way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto Thee.

9 Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies : for I flee unto Thee to hide me.

10 Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee, for Thou art my God : let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness.

lect for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, in which we address God as 'wont to give more than either we *desire* or *deserve*.'

2. *For in thy sight, &c.*] No words could more emphatically disclaim all notion of personal merit.

— *Shall no man living be justified*] More correctly, No man living is *just*. Many, we are privileged to believe, though justly liable to condemnation, shall be *justified*, or accounted righteous, through the atonement and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Rom. iii. 20—26 ; Gal. ii. 16 ; Tit. iii. 5—7.

3. *Hath laid me in the darkness, &c.*] The Psalmist may, perhaps, allude to the persecutions of Saul, whereby he was constantly in peril of life, and driven to seek shelter in dark hiding places.

5. *I remember the time past*] I call to mind the wonderful works which Thou didst in the days of our fathers, and in the old time before them. Refer to Ps. xlv. 1 ; lxxvii. 5.

— *Muse*] "Meditate."

10. *Into the land of righteousness*] Rather, it would seem to mean, into a land of evenness—a level land ; the plain and safe path of obedience and duty.

11 Quicken me, O Lord, for thy Name's sake : and for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy goodness slay mine enemies : and destroy all them that vex my soul ; for I am thy servant.

Morning.]

PSALM CXLIV.

[Day 30.]

FOR VICTORY AND THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE.

BLESSED be the Lord my strength : who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight ;

2 My hope and my fortress, my castle and deliverer, my defender in whom I trust : who subdueth my people that is under me.

3 Lord, what is man, that Thou hast such respect unto him : or the son of man, that Thou so regardest him ?

4 Man is like a thing of nought : his time passeth away like a shadow.

5 Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down : touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 Cast forth thy lightning, and tear them : shoot out thine arrows, and consume them.

7 Send down thine hand from above : deliver me, and take me out of the great waters, from the hand of strange children ;

11. *Quicken me]* Give me new life ; revive my spirit, as often before. See Ps. cxix. 25.

12. *Of thy goodness slay mine enemies]* Out of merciful consideration for thy people, destroy those rebellious enemies who oppose themselves to thy servants and thereby set themselves against Thee. The Christian, applying this Psalm to his own use, will pray God to endue him with strength to resist and overcome his spiritual enemies. Compare second Collect for Morning Service, and third Collect in Lent. 1 Sam. xxv. 29 ; Luke xx. 17, 18.

Ps. CXLIV., ascribed to David, begins, like the eighteenth, in terms characteristic of a warrior king.

Its chief subjects are, triumph over his enemies, praise to God for deliverance from their power, and for plenty and prosperity among his people.

2. *Who subdueth my people, &c.]* Or, Who bringeth the people into subjection to me.

3. *Lord, what is man, &c.]* The same sentiment of God's undeserved goodness is expressed in very similar terms in Ps. viii. 4 ; and quoted Heb. ii. 6.

6. *Cast forth thy lightning, and tear them]* David prays that God will employ this most formidable arm of his power to scatter and overthrow his enemies. Deut. xxxii. 42.

7. *Out of the great waters]* The depths of trouble and distress.

8 Whose mouth talketh of vanity : and their right hand is a right hand of wickedness.

9 I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God : and sing praises unto Thee upon a ten-stringed lute.

10 Thou hast given victory unto kings : and hast delivered David thy servant from the peril of the sword.

11 Save me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children : whose mouth talketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.

12 That our sons may grow up as the young plants : and that our daughters may be as the polished corners of the temple.

13 That our garners may be full and plenteous with all manner of store : that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets.

14 That our oxen may be strong to labour ; that there be no decay : no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets.

15 Happy are the people that are in such a case : yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.

PSALM CXLV.

THE POWER, RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND MERCY OF GOD.

Proper Psalm for Whit Sunday.

I WILL magnify Thee, O God, my King : and I will praise thy Name for ever and ever.

7. *Strange children*] The heathen nations, who were strangers to God and his law.

8. *Talketh of vanity*] Or, more plainly, speaketh falsehood. Ps. xxxviii. 12.

— *A right hand of wickedness*] Or, of perjury ; meaning, perhaps, when they raise their right hand for an oath, they swear falsely. See Gen. xiv. 22 ; Isa. xlv. 20, and verse 11.

9. *I will sing a new song, &c.*] Compare Rev. v. 9, 10.

11. *Iniquity*] "Falsehood."

12. *As the young plants*] Or, it may be, as plants shooting up vigorously in their youth.

— *The polished corners of the temple*] Tall and graceful, like the rich and ornamental columns of the temple.

13. *Garners*] Granaries. Deut. xxx. 9.

— *Streets*] Broad and open ways.

14. *Complaining*] Lamentation.

Ps. CXLV. bears in Bib. Ver.

2 Every day will I give thanks unto Thee : and praise thy Name for ever and ever.

3 Great is the Lord, and marvellous, worthy to be praised : there is no end of his greatness.

4 One generation shall praise thy works unto another : and declare thy power.

5 As for me, I will be talking of thy worship : thy glory, thy praise, and wondrous works ;

6 So that men shall speak of the might of thy marvellous acts : and I will also tell of thy greatness.

7 The memorial of thine abundant kindness shall be shewed : and men shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 The Lord is gracious and merciful : long-suffering, and of great goodness.

9 The Lord is loving unto every man : and his mercy is over all his works.

10 All thy works praise Thee, O Lord : and thy saints give thanks unto Thee.

11 They shew the glory of thy kingdom : and talk of thy power ;

12 That thy power, thy glory, and mightiness of thy kingdom : might be known unto men.

the title of "David's Psalm of Praise." Unlike many of the other songs of the same inspired minstrel, in which the notes of sorrow and distress are blended with those of joy and happiness, this Psalm is one of praise and thanksgiving throughout. From the first verse to the last, Jehovah is extolled for his greatness, his power, his glory, his righteousness, his mercy, the wonders of his Creation, the eternity of his kingdom, and the excellency and perfection of his moral attributes. There was a saying among the Hebrews of old that, 'He could not fail of being a child of the world to come, who should recite this Psalm three times every

day;' meaning, probably, at the three regular periods of devotion (Ps. lv. 17). It is indeed such a Psalm as we may imagine to be sung round the Throne of God, by 'angels and archangels, and all the company of Heaven.'

3. *Marvellous, worthy, &c.*] *Marvellous* is here used adverbially, and properly the two words should be coupled by a hyphen. *Marvellous-worthy to be praised*, corresponds with the "greatly to be praised" of the Bible Version.

7. *The memorial, &c.*] In other words, men shall keep alive in songs of praise the memory of thy overflowing goodness.

13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom : and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages.

14 The Lord upholdeth all such as fall : and lifteth up all those that are down.

15 The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord : and Thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou openest thine hand : and fillest all things living with plenteousness.

17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways : and holy in all his works.

18 The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him : yea, all such as call upon Him faithfully.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him : He also will hear their cry, and will help them.

20 The Lord preserveth all them that love Him : but scattereth abroad all the ungodly.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord : and let all flesh give thanks unto his holy Name for ever and ever.

PSALM CXLVI.

SURE TRUST TO BE REPOSED IN GOD ALONE.

PRAISE the Lord, O my soul ; while I live will I praise the Lord : yea, as long as I have any being, I will sing praises unto my God.

2 O put not your trust in princes, nor in any child of man : for there is no help in them.

13. *Thy kingdom*] This assertion of an everlasting kingdom carries us on to that universal reign of Christ which shall have no end. See Daniel vii. 14.

14. *Such as fall*] Them that are falling.

20. *But scattereth abroad, &c.*] "But all the wicked will He destroy."

21. *All flesh*] All mankind.

Ps. CXLVI. and the remaining four are called Hallelujah Psalms,

as all begin with the word Hallelujah, or 'Praise the Lord.' It is supposed that they were written in the time of Nehemiah, for the public service of the second Temple.

2. *O put not your trust*] It is vain to trust in any of the race of man, even the chiefest and most powerful, for all are equally mortal, and unable to save even themselves from death. He alone (4) is to be considered happy, who hath the God of Jacob for his help. Jer. xvii. 5.

3 For when the breath of man goeth forth he shall turn again to his earth : and then all his thoughts perish.

4 Blessed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help : and whose hope is in the Lord his God ;

5 Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is : who keepeth his promise for ever ;

6 Who helpeth them to right that suffer wrong : who feedeth the hungry.

7 The Lord looseth men out of prison : the Lord giveth sight to the blind.

8 The Lord helpeth them that are fallen : the Lord careth for the righteous.

9 The Lord careth for the strangers ; He defendeth the fatherless and widow : as for the way of the ungodly, He turneth it upside down.

10 The Lord thy God, O Sion, shall be King for evermore : and throughout all generations.

Evening.]

PSALM CXLVII.

[Day 30.]

RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY.—GOD'S POWER AND GOODNESS.

O PRAISE the Lord, for it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God : yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.

2 The Lord doth build up Jerusalem : and gather together the outcasts of Israel.

3. *All his thoughts perish*] All his plans for himself, all his means of counselling or assisting others, shall come to an end.

7. *The Lord looseth*] It will be observed how closely this account of the merciful goodness of Jehovah to his creatures agrees with the history of our Lord's miracles in the Gospel. See Matt. xi. 5 ; Luke iv. 18 ; John ix. 7 ; x. 16. Compare Isa. xlix. 9 ; lxi. 1.

8. *The Lord helpeth, &c.*] This verse is more accurately rendered

in Bible Version, "The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down : the Lord loveth the righteous."

9. *He turneth it upside down*] He turneth the steps of the wicked out of the path on which they had entered, so as to defeat or frustrate their purpose. Job v. 12, 13.

Ps. CXLVII. and those which follow, to the end of the Psalter, are characterised by a singularly cheerful and joyous tone, which may, perhaps, be ascribed to the national

3 He healeth those that are broken in heart : and giveth medicine to heal their sickness.

4 He telleth the number of the stars : and calleth them all by their names.

5 Great is our Lord, and great is his power : yea, and his wisdom is infinite.

6 The Lord setteth up the meek : and bringeth the ungodly down to the ground.

7 O sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving : sing praises upon the harp unto our God ;

8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth : and maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the use of men ;

9 Who giveth fodder unto the cattle : and feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him.

10 He hath no pleasure in the strength of an horse : neither delighteth He in any man's legs.

11 But the Lord's delight is in them that fear Him : and put their trust in his mercy.

12 Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem : praise thy God, O Sion.

13 For He hath made fast the bars of thy gates : and hath blessed thy children within thee.

rejoicing at the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (Nehem. iii.); and the reunion of the long-dispersed people according to prophecy. See Isa. xi. 12 ; lvi. 8.

3. *Giveth medicine, &c.*] Or better, as in Bible Version, "bindeth up their wounds."

4. *The number of the stars, &c.*] The allusion to the infinite knowledge of the Almighty, in numbering and naming the stars, seems introduced for the purpose of convincing his people that He knows their condition and circumstances, and can bring together again his 'outcasts' from all the countries in which they have been scattered. Compare Isa. xl. 26.

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6. *The Lord setteth up, &c.*] It is the attribute of an All-righteous God to exalt the humble and meek, and to cast down the proud and self-confident. See 1 Sam. ii. 8 ; Luke i. 52 ; James iv. 6.

10, 11. *He hath no pleasure, &c.*] God regardeth not the strength of horses, nor man's agility and swiftness of foot. He gives not the victory to those who rely on cavalry or infantry, but looks with favour on those only who fear Him and trust to his protection. See Ps. xx. 7, and note ; Amos ii. 15.

13. *The bars of thy gates*] The rebuilding of the walls and towers of Jerusalem may, perhaps, be here referred to. Neh. iv. 7.

14 He maketh peace in thy borders : and filleth thee with the flour of wheat.

15 He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth : and his word runneth very swiftly.

16 He giveth snow like wool : and scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.

17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels : who is able to abide his frost ?

18 He sendeth out his word, and melteth them : He bloweth with his wind, and the waters flow.

19 He sheweth his word unto Jacob : his statutes and ordinances unto Israel.

20 He hath not dealt so with any nation : neither have the heathen knowledge of his laws.

PSALM CXLVIII.

ALL CREATION CALLED TO PRAISE THE GREAT CREATOR.

O PRAISE the Lord of heaven : praise Him in the height.

2 Praise Him, all ye angels of his : praise Him, all his host.

3 Praise Him, sun and moon : praise Him, all ye stars and light.

4 Praise Him, all ye heavens : and ye waters that are above the heavens.

14. *The flour of wheat*] "The finest of the wheat." Compare Deut. xxxii. 14.

17. *He casteth forth his ice like morsels*] The allusion seems to be to hailstones, which fall about us like morsels of bread. God is described in this and other Psalms, as the great agent in the works of nature.

20. *He hath not dealt so with any nation*] God's special favour to his chosen people is here gratefully acknowledged. They alone of all nations had been admitted to a knowledge of his laws and ways.

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Ps. CXLVIII. is an animated appeal to heaven and earth, to angels and spirits above, and then, in order, to all the inhabitants of earth, air, and sea, to exalt and magnify the Lord and Maker of all. The 'Benedicite,' or Song of the Three Children (Dan. iii.), which is sometimes used instead of the 'Te Deum' at Morning Service, is a paraphrase and expansion of this Psalm.

1. *In the height*] Ye who dwell in the highest heavens.

3. *All ye stars and light*] Rather, "All ye stars of light."

5 Let them praise the Name of the Lord : for He spake the word, and they were made ; He commanded, and they were created.

6 He hath made them fast for ever and ever : He hath given them a law which shall not be broken.

7 Praise the Lord upon earth : ye dragons, and all deeps ;

8 Fire and hail, snow and vapours : wind and storm, fulfilling his word ;

9 Mountains and all hills : fruitful trees and all cedars ;

10 Beasts and all cattle : worms and feathered fowl ;

11 Kings of the earth and all people : princes and all judges of the world ;

12 Young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the Name of the Lord : for his Name only is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth.

13 He shall exalt the horn of his people ; all his saints shall praise Him : even the children of Israel, even the people that serveth Him.

PSALM CXLIX.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.

O SING unto the Lord a new song : let the congregation of saints praise Him.

6. *A law*] The law which regulates the motions of the heavenly bodies, and keeps them in their several orbits.

7. *Ye dragons*] Sea-monsters, probably whales.

8. *Vapours*] Some old translations render the word, Ice.

10. *Worms*] Or generally, as in Bible Version, "creeping things."

12. *His praise, &c.*] Rather, "his glory."

13. *He shall exalt, &c.*] The Psalmist, after having exhorted all creatures in heaven and earth to praise the Lord, reminds the Israel-

ites (the people that served, or were "near unto Him," Bible Version) of the special reasons they have to laud and magnify Him for his manifold favours to their nation.

Ps. CXLIX.—The Psalmist calls upon the people to unite in songs of praise and thanksgiving to Jehovah, for the salvation which He had wrought for them, and also in anticipation of the future triumph of the kingdom of God over the heathen world.

1. *A new song, &c.*] Sing a fresh song for some new mercy or

2 Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him : and let the children of Sion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his Name in the dance : let them sing praises unto Him with tabret and harp.

4 For the Lord hath pleasure in his people : and helpeth the meek-hearted.

5 Let the saints be joyful with glory : let them rejoice in their beds.

6 Let the praises of God be in their mouth : and a two-edged sword in their hands ;

7 To be avenged of the heathen : and to rebuke the people ;

8 To bind their kings in chains : and their nobles with links of iron.

9 That they may be avenged of them, as it is written : such honour have all his saints.

PSALM CL.

UNIVERSAL SONG OF PRAISE.

O PRAISE God in his holiness : praise Him in the firmament of his power.

deliverance ; sing his praise in the assembly of his servants.

3. *In the dance*] Refer to Exod. xv. 20 ; 2 Sam. vi. 14.

5. *Let them rejoice in their beds*] Let his ransomed saints, who, but a short time ago, watered their couches with tears, now exult while they lie upon their beds at the thought of the wonderful restoration which God had wrought out for them. Refer to Hos. vii. 14.

6. *A two-edged sword*] While blessing God as the author of their present prosperity, let them be ready to execute his judgments upon the surrounding heathen nations. Refer to Nehem. iv. 17.

8. *To bind their kings*] In other words, To bring the powers of the world into captivity to the obedience

of Christ. See 2 Cor. x. 5.

9. *That they may be avenged of them, as it is written*] "To execute upon them the judgment written." See Deut. vii. 24 ; xxxii. 41—43. The final judgment of the world, when the angels shall separate the wicked from the just, seems to be here foreshown.

— *Such honour, &c.*] The honour of being God's instruments in subduing the heathen nations and their kings. Deut. vii. 24 ; xxxii. 41—43 ; Rev. xvii. 14.

Ps. CL. may be regarded as a doxology, forming a suitable conclusion of the whole Psalter.

1. *In his holiness*] Or, "In his sanctuary ;" *i.e.* his temple, or Church upon earth.

2 Praise Him in his noble acts : praise Him according to his excellent greatness.

3 Praise Him in the sound of the trumpet : praise Him upon the lute and harp.

4 Praise Him in the cymbals and dances : praise Him upon the strings and pipe.

5 Praise Him upon the well-tuned cymbals : praise Him upon the loud cymbals.

6 Let every thing that hath breath : praise the Lord.

1. *The firmament of his power*] His heavenly temple—the boundless expanse of the heavens, which are the work of his creative power.

2. *His excellent greatness*] Or, The greatness of his majesty.

3. *The lute*] Or psaltery, a stringed instrument.

4. *Upon the strings and pipe*] “With stringed instruments and organs.” Isa. xxxviii. 20.

6. *Let every thing that hath breath, &c.*] If all things animate may properly be called upon to bless their Maker for his goodness, what

an infinitely heavier debt of gratitude is due from us, who have been not only created by his power, but redeemed by his infinite love in Christ Jesus, through Whom also we have been made heirs of his eternal kingdom.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE SON, AND TO THE HOLY GHOST.

AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND EVER SHALL BE, WORLD WITHOUT END. AMEN.

FINIS.



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